

Russia on the Way



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TORONTO

Russia on the Way



BY HARRISON SALISBURY

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We, the Russians, Have Done This

I

When I boarded a plane in Moscow, taking the long way home through India, Australia and the Pacific, I had been in Russia eight months. It had been a good time for seeing that country—how good I did not realize until I could view it in retrospect. On the long plane trip home, the thousands of sweltering miles across Persia, up and down India, across Australia, New Guinea and the blue spaces of the Pacific, there was time to think. And in America there has been time, also.

I went to Russia at a good moment.

Tehran was just finished. In the Russia I saw, the worst of the war was over. True, there were heavy battles ahead, and many lives would be lost before the war was won. The Russians had still to blast the Germans from the Ukraine. Leningrad had yet to shake loose the iron grip of the encircling German forts, and the Nazis sat warm and secure within White Russia. Even the Crimea was a Nazi rest camp. But by now Russia knew that the war would be won.

No longer did Russians speak of Moscow and Stalingrad and Leningrad with almost religious awe, only half able to believe what they had done there. By now the Russians I met knew that Germany had been beaten—that from here on, the way would be hard and bloody but the end was not in doubt. And they had begun to think about what this meant—the people had, I mean, because the hard-thinking analysts of the Kremlin had long before worked out logically and precisely every implication, not only of a Russian victory but of a Russian defeat. The men of the Kremlin study

politics and war as they might a game of chess; and they are master players. At the time when forty divisions of Siberian troops marched singing through the Moscow snows to save the capital at Vyazma the Kremlin could have told you precisely what would happen if Hitler captured Moscow. It could have told you, too, what would happen if Hitler were stopped.

Now, the implications of Russian strength were beginning to spread to all the country. The Russians I knew were pinching themselves and saying, softly, if that was their nature, or cockily, if that was it: "*Tovarishchi*, do you realize what we have done? We have beaten the Germans. We have beaten the *nemetski*! We, the Russians have done this."

It was a good time to see the Soviet because, although the war was still going on, the Russians were beginning to plan for peace. They were scrubbing the hideous camouflage off the Moscow buildings. And out in the Urals, factory managers wanted samples of the latest American gadgets for use as models in reconverting their shell factories for peace. In Samarkand the restoration of Tamerlane's tomb had been resumed, and in Siberia they were planning model factory cities in which each worker would have his own home and garden, along with paved streets and five-minute bus service. In the little town of Zagorsk the toymakers again were carving out bears and tigers instead of wooden fittings for tanks.

The Russia I saw was a Russia in transition from war to peace. War was still going on, but the Kremlin, as well as the people, were looking ahead to the day when the victory cannon of Moscow would no longer roar out nightly salutes; when gray little postcards, the Russian casualty notices, would no longer sift down by thousands each week; when all of Russia would be free and the fields could be sown and the factory chimneys would smoke again.

The Kremlin plans for peace were being taken out of the wooden desk drawers where they had reposed, and Stalin was spending more and more time with diplomats and foreign emissaries and missions rather than with his Red Army staff. The National Hotel was filling up with delegations from Poland and Czechoslovakia, Finland and Romania. Constantly the staff of American officers grew. The Americans came and came until they overflowed the American Embassy apartments, the National, the Embassy itself; and finally the harassed Military Mission started putting up tents on the Embassy grounds. The next day the Russians "found it possible" to turn over a run-down twenty-room hotel to accommodate the overflow—but the tents stayed up in Spasso's back yard just in case.

This was probably the best time to see Russia during the war, though I had no way of knowing that in advance. I did not know that I would travel some 20,000 miles back and forth across the face of the Soviet Union from Leningrad south to Odessa, Yalta and Sevastopol; from Moscow east to Novosibirsk, from the Urals to the hidden cities of Tashkent and Samarkand, deep in the heart of Asia. My idea was quite different.

I came to Russia for a six weeks' look, a quick survey—in and out—and the summit of my ambition was a trip to the Red Army front. Instead, I stayed eight months and saw the battlefields of the Ukraine and the Crimea, the secret arsenals that kept Russia going when the west was overrun, the beginnings of Russo-American military collaboration, the inner workings of Soviet recesses I had never expected to penetrate—and the Russian people.

But I never got to the fighting front.

I was in Algiers when the United Press directed me to go to Cairo, where the news of the Tehran conference was breaking, and then on to Moscow to relieve Henry Shapiro,

our veteran Moscow manager, for a few weeks of his leave in America. In Cairo I was too busy handling the Tehran communiqués, and fighting censorship and communications battles, to think very much about the implications of Tehran upon my new assignment.

What thought I gave ran along conventional lines—that the Tehran agreement should make covering Russia much easier than before. After all Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt had sat down for the first time, ironed out their differences and found a common meeting ground. Beyond a doubt the question of a second front had been settled. For the first time, it seemed to me, mutual suspicions had been allayed—and, from the standpoint of reporting in Russia, this should be all to the good. Unlike some of my colleagues, I thought, I was not going into Russia dewy-eyed. I knew too many correspondents who had worked in Moscow and I had heard vivid stories, not only of professional difficulties but of the fight to get enough to eat in Russia. I did not think I had any illusions. It seemed a good time to go.

We had an off-the-record press conference with Churchill about Tehran. Churchill was purring. He tugged at a hall-smoked cigar and rolled off his impressions in sonorous phrases, while a buff-colored Angora cat wandered in and out of the conference room. Tehran, the Prime Minister said, had dealt not only with the war but with the whole future of Europe . . . the world in general. "Broad events shape themselves," he said, rolling the words on his tongue like old brandy. "But they depend upon the good will of the principals. . . . I had a very memorable birthday . . . a most amusing evening. We adopted the Russian custom of toasts, and I must say it certainly makes a dinner go. You get to several score toasts, and the sort of stiff, conventional officialism tends to drop more and more away." I did not fore-

see, as I scribbled down Churchill's description of his birthday dinner, how often I would recall his words in Russia.

Churchill outlined the results of the conference. There had been "absolute agreement." Never before had so much been accomplished so quickly. There had been "a melding of minds, a union of spirit," the war was going almost frighteningly well. We were "on the crest of a wave." Yet, said the Prime Minister, carefully dusting his cigar in a plain glass ash tray, he was "a little surprised to find so many serious, responsible authorities hopeful of speedy results." He did not take this view himself, he emphasized. He was not willing "to guarantee that the Germans will not get through the winter." "But," he said, "I won't bet on the opposite. It is a very open question and an even bet."

This was the first week in December, 1943. Victory, it proved, was still eighteen months distant. I took a glum satisfaction in Churchill's optimism. Imbued with hope by the Mussolini collapse, I had bet thirteen pounds on the war's end. All of those bets had been lost on December first.

It seemed likely to me that I might just have time to go to Russia, take a quick look at the front and swing back across Africa and Italy, returning to London, my home base, for an Easter peace.

I hurriedly laid in my Moscow supplies—armed with a list of requirements cabled me by my Moscow colleagues. The list was, in itself, a commentary on how things were going in Russia. It started with a case of United States Army K-rations. I never heard of a G.I. in Europe or the Pacific who had a good word to say for K-rations. I hated them in England and Africa, but in Russia I thought they were wonderful. I even got so that I could eat the curious K-ration component which was described as chocolate but which tasted like a sleazy mixture of waste chalk and iron

rust. Then there were sixty rolls of toilet paper—not for myself alone, but to supply my American colleagues in Moscow. After getting it there, with much difficulty, I found the correspondents very blasé. They had just wangled a monthly ration from the American military mission. However, my Russian friends valued toilet paper very highly. They preferred it to *Pravda* for rolling cigarettes. There were cans of dried egg powder—the same powder which every G.I. has cursed around the world. I had cursed it myself in England, and so had the poor Britishers who found it on the tightly rationed shelves of their grocery stores. But in Russia I got so that I thought powdered eggs, water, and chopped onion was a dish fit for the gods.

A list of all the supplies I carted into Russia would be tedious. There were wicks and flints for lighters (mine were practically the only ones in Moscow); lighter-fluid, one hundred small envelopes of cocoa powder, pencils, smoking tobacco, shoe polish (very rare in the Soviet Union I saw); chocolate bars, soap; packets of dehydrated soup cubes, a pitiful (it turned out) supply of coffee, and what seemed like enough wool clothing to dress a platoon of correspondents.

Later on I had little to complain of regarding the advice I received on supplies for Russia—except for shoes. I went in with a pair of Army oxfords, a pair of G.I. shoes and a pair of heavy boots. I came out on my uppers. I doubt if there was a day that I walked less than two miles in Russia—and five-mile and ten-mile days were common.

II

Loaded with all the supplies I could carry, I took off from Cairo on December 16, 1943. My hope and expectation were that I would reach Moscow in ample time for Christmas. I thought Christmas in Moscow would be a fine kick-

off to my brief stay in Russia. I even ran over in my mind a few possible leads to my story. But I reckoned without the Captain.

Before he entered the Army the Captain had been Chief of Detectives in a Florida city. Now he was an M.P. Captain, attached to the fabulous Persian Gulf Command; and he was returning to Persia with a prisoner whom he had picked up in Nairobi.

It was not until we got to Habbaniya that I realized that the Captain and the alert, talkative youngster who was his traveling companion were, actually, captor and prisoner. From the way the young man scurried around to look after the gray, middle-aged Captain I had thought he might be his son. But when we got to Habbaniya I heard the Captain talking to a very correct Sergeant of the R.A.F.

"He's a good boy," the Captain was saying. "I don't think he'd try to make a break for it. Of course, if you've got a lockup here, I could put him in there."

"We have a detention cell, sir," the Sergeant said. "It is very secure."

"What I was thinkin'," the Captain continued, as though he had not heard the R.A.F. man, "was that he and I could bunk together. Doesn't seem to me there's any place a party could go hereabouts. Seems as how there's nothin' but desert from here to Cairo."

The R.A.F. Sergeant dutifully agreed "Of course, there's Baghdad, sir," he added.

"Well," drawled the Captain, "I guess we can consider that settled. He's a right good boy. Hasn't given me a moment's care so far. Now there's another question I'd like to take up with you. It's about them gobblers I seen wandering around."

It took the R.A.F. Sergeant at least five minutes to understand what the Captain meant by "gobblers."

"Dammit, man," the Captain finally said, "you can see them damn birds. They are wandering all over the place. Them turkeys. Do you think the Mess Sergeant might have a few more than he needs for Christmas?"

"I don't rightly know, sir," the R.A.F. man replied, mopping his brow. "It could be."

The upshot of the Captain's conversation was that I did not get to Moscow for Christmas. Nor for New Year's. Not even for the Orthodox Russian Christmas, which is January 6th. I began to think I would never get to Moscow.

What happened was that the Captain made a deal. For approximately twenty-five dollars or its equivalent in an esoteric Iraqi currency known as "phils," the Captain became the possessor of two gobblers and one hen turkey. With the aid of his "boy" he made his selection from the flock which was pecking around the sandy R.A.F. barracks.

We had put down at Habbaniya because of bad weather, but we were scheduled to take off at six A.M. on a direct hop to Tehran, where I was catching a Soviet plane for Moscow. The next morning was something like a Mack Sennett comedy. The Captain had turned his birds to pasture during the night. And in the gray light of dawn it was impossible to tell one turkey from another. He and his "boy" scurried around the cantonment with gunny sacks, trying to catch some birds—any birds. Our pilot stood by patiently. It grew lighter, and overhead we saw gray clouds scudding by in a high wind. The pilot laughed with the rest of us as the Captain and his "boy" finally caught three bewildered turkeys, hastily cut leg holes in the gunny sacks, inserted the squabbling birds, one to a sack, and tied up the mouths of the bags with twine.

We took off—about an hour late—with the birds slung onto the floor in the rear of our C-47. We climbed steadily, and headed east for the mountain passes that led to Tehran.

At first we flew through cloud formations tinged with rose and purple by the rising sun. But as we droned eastward the cloud banks thickened, and we climbed for clearer air. As we pushed higher and higher, the turkeys were disturbed. They squawked and flopped around like fish out of water. They also developed diarrhea. Turkeys, it seemed, had a definite flight ceiling.

Meanwhile, the pilot bucked our plane into the cloud banks. He climbed and climbed, plowing first to the right and then to the left, trying to find a spot of clear air through the high passes. The trouble was that our plane had no de-icers. When we got up to 16,000 feet and still found icing conditions, he gave up. "I'm sorry," he said, when he came into the cabin after heading us back to Habbaniya. "The weather boys gave me clearance. But the weather has changed. If we had taken off on schedule we would have been in Tehran by now."

We looked at the Captain and then at the turkeys. It still seemed funny, then. It seemed not so funny, an hour later, when we got back over Habbaniya and could hardly see the airdrome because of a sandstorm sweeping the desert. It seemed even less funny when a tricky wind almost smashed us into the desert when we came in to land. Still, when we finally got down we gave the Captain a hand at getting his turkeys onto the four-by-four.

The next morning we didn't even try to get to Tehran. The weather up in the passes was too thick. So we flew down to Abadan on the Persian Gulf. Two days later the pilot abandoned us in Abadan and flew back to Cairo. The weather to Tehran was impossible. We had been turned back twice at the passes by clouds and icing conditions. We were getting nowhere fast.

By this time, having helped the Captain and his "boy" load the turkeys on and off the airplane some five times,

and having been badly delayed in getting to Tehran, much less to Moscow, the turkeys didn't seem funny at all.

After several days waiting in Abadan, we—Jim Fleming, a C.B.S. correspondent also bound for Moscow, and myself—decided to give up the airways and travel to Tehran by railroad. We told the Captain of our decision. He was in a dilemma. Technically, he was supposed to turn his "boy" over to the Military Police in Khorramshahr, across the river from Abadan. But, what with his three turkeys and eight assorted cartons and barracks bags full of crockery, cooking pans, and supplies which he had acquired between Nairobi and Cairo, he hardly saw how he could manage without the prisoner. We left him frantically ringing on the field telephone, trying to raise the M.P. post on the other side of the river to see whether he could deliver his "boy" in Tehran.

Jim and I, meanwhile, carted our possessions onto a jeep and jolted off to the ferry. We crossed the river to Khorramshahr, drove up to Ahwaz and clambered aboard the train for Tehran a few minutes before it was due to leave. We stowed our luggage in the compartment and settled down to a game of gin rummy. Hardly had we dealt the cards when we heard a commotion outside the train. We moved over to the corridor and looked out the window. It was the Captain—the Captain, plus three crated turkeys and eight assorted cartons and duffle bags.

"Hi, yah, boys," the Captain puffed. "Just made it, I reckon. Had a mighty stubborn time gitting here without my boy. But I made it."

At that point, Jim and I gave up. We accepted the Captain and his turkeys as part of our life. We even went up to the baggage car the next morning to help the Captain feed and water his birds, and we worried over the danger that they might get pneumonia in the chilly mountain air. The

night after we arrived in Tehran the Captain's turkeys disappeared.

"I got a sense of humor," the Captain said, "just like anybody else. Somebody is trying to play me a trick. But I don't want to know who it is. I don't trust myself. I'm a reasonable man. But some folks have a very peculiar sense of humor—very peculiar. If those turkeys turn up—or if they don't—I don't want to know who done it."

The Captain kept patting his hip as he told his story. We noticed that the six-shooter he usually wore was missing. Evidently the Captain had an accurate idea of what his sense of humor could stand and what would be too much for it. We thought this was very funny, too, until we talked to Malcolm. Malcolm was the manager of Intourist, the Soviet travel agency, in Tehran. By this time it was two days before Christmas. We had been eight days en route on a trip which, had it not been for the Captain's turkeys, would have taken about eight hours' flying time.

Malcolm said he was sorry. The weather had turned very bad. He did not know when a plane would be flying to Moscow. There had been a plane which got through only a few days ago, about the 20th, if he was not mistaken. But now—he shrugged his shoulders—who could tell? Last year at this time there was a period of five weeks when no planes took off for Moscow.

"Five weeks?" I asked, incredulous.

"Yes," Malcolm said. "It was five weeks and three days, I believe. Very bad weather. Damn, what a backlog we had! Biggest backlog ever! We have a backlog now, too. Maybe it will be so big again, but I don't think, yes."

Fleming and I pattered down from the dismal second floor Intourist office.

"What do you think of the Captain and his turkeys?" Jim said.

"I think they—" I started to say.

"Don't say it," Fleming said, "because they do—definitely. And their grandmothers, too."

The planes finally started to run again in mid-January. The backlog, by now, was stupendous. I had taken down my luggage five times on false alarms before I got out.

We had a daily routine. It went like this: I would call Malcolm at 10:30 in the morning. "How does it look," I would say, trying to sound hearty and confident. "Well," Malcolm would reply, "I don't know whether the plane will fly. You call me about three o'clock, yes? I will know." . . . Three o'clock. Fleming calls: "Malcolm?"—"Yes. Who is calling, please?"—"This is Mr. Fleming calling. Will the plane leave in the morning?"—"I am so sorry. This is very difficult. You know the weather reports are not good. You will call me at ten o'clock tomorrow, yes?"—And so on. We grew very tired of this routine.

Finally Malcolm called. The plane would leave the next day. I brought my luggage in. Each day it had grown as I waited in Tehran. By now there was nearly three hundred pounds of gear. Malcolm was very sorry. I could take all the baggage I wished into Russia, at a dollar and a fraction per pound. But the plane was very crowded. Did that mean I was being restricted on what I could take into the Soviet? No, indeed, Malcolm said. Intourist would take anything I desired into Russia. It just meant that I could take only thirty-six kilos (a little less than eighty pounds) with me. The rest would arrive on the next plane.

I was not in a mood to argue. "Okay, Malcolm," I said. "You guarantee the baggage will be on the next plane?"

"Well," he said, "naturally."

So I took my excess out to the Embassy and left it with Jack Flynn, the harassed young man who was in charge of forwarding the diplomatic pouches up to Moscow. Jack

said he would get the stuff up, even if he had to convoy it by land; and he did—by land.

Three weeks after arriving in Tehran I took off for Russia. It was still a good time to be going to Russia; but the Captain's turkeys no longer seemed very funny.

III

The first thing I saw of Russia was the snow-capped Caucasus mountains standing off to the west of the Caspian Sea. They were a welcome sight. We had flown up over the mountains from Tehran and out over the Caspian for a long way. The Caspian was very blue, and very choppy. It was speckled with whitecaps. Land looked very good after our experience over the sea. I had been warned that Soviet pilots liked to fly low over the Caspian, so I was not surprised when our plane leveled out at about 800 feet after we left the coast of Persia. We flew ahead into air that was more and more turbulent. The plane rocked and shuddered, and the unlashed gear piled around us began to shift and totter.

I looked out the window and thought that the Caspian was much too blue and much too close. In all directions there was nothing but the sea. Not a ship was in sight. The air grew rougher, and now we were zooming up, light as a feather, and stalling back, heavy as lead. Then it happened. The bottom dropped out and we fell like an elevator in its shaft—flat, heavy and helpless. You could hear the whine of the propeller as it bit for air that wasn't there. Diplomatic pouches and cartons of K-rations careened through the plane. We fell too fast for thought. My eyes were fixed hypnotically on the water, which rushed up at us. But, just as the Caspian was so close that every breaker, every whitecap was etched in the bright sunlight, our propellers suddenly bit into the air with a high-pitched moan,

and we surged frantically forward and up. I took off my fur cap and wiped the perspiration from my forehead. "Now," I thought, "we will gain altitude while we can." But we fought on across the water at 800 feet until we got to Baku.

Coming into Baku, there were rusty red stains smearing over the green water and then a forest of oil derricks clustered on the sand flats. There were a couple of American oil engineers on the plane, coming to install some new equipment from the United States, and Baku gave them a thrill. "Say!" one of them said. "This looks just like Houston, Texas. Houston is my old stamping ground. Coming in there you get the same kind of stains on the water. And even the oil derricks look the same." I accepted his comparison. I had never flown into Houston. For my money the Caspian looked about the same as Lake Michigan but, my little Russian handbook told me, it was more than three times as big.

After customs examiners had idly rummaged through our baggage we took off again for Astrakhan. There had been no difficulty with customs except over some oranges and lemons which two returning correspondents, Alec Worth and Marjorie Shaw, were taking back to Moscow from Cairo. The customs examiners had carefully extracted the fruit. Alec protested, in voluble Russian.

"We are sorry," said the inspector. "But there is a strict regulation against taking citrus fruit into Russia. It is due to the Mediterranean fruit fly. We do not want it to get into the Soviet Union."

"But," sputtered Alec, "it is the dead of winter. Fruit flies can't live in this climate. Besides, there are no orange groves in Moscow."

"*Puzhalista*—please," the inspector said. "It is the regulation."

Alec paced the floor in indignation. Marjorie was almost

in tears. The customs guard was worried too. He knew very well how rare fresh fruit was in Moscow. Finally, he had a brilliant idea. "Perhaps," he said, "you will eat this fruit on the airplane, yes?"

"May we take it along if we eat it on the plane?" Alec asked.

"I think that would be all right," the little customs man said. "Of course you must be careful not to drop the peelings from the plane. They must be burned as soon as you get to Moscow."

"*Puzhalista*," Alec beamed.

"*Puzhalista*," the little customs man returned.

Astrakhan was a city of wood. When our plane was set down there for the night, I did not know how typical of Russia the city was. All I knew was that this was an ancient city, once the capital of a great Tatar principedom and, later, a hotbed of wild conspiracies against Moscow during the bloody seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the flat light of a January afternoon, it looked like a shabby Currier & Ives print of some place like Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1869. The houses were of logs, carefully hewn and stripped, neatly chinked with mortar—but unpainted. Or, if there had been paint, it had long since blistered off in the summer heat and the icy cold of Russian winter. A good many houses on the outskirts of town were vacant, and the snow was drifting in through gaping doors and sagging windows.

I suppose 95 percent of the buildings in Astrakhan were wooden, and the only difference between the buildings of Astrakhan and those of the pioneer settlements in the Dakotas was that the Astrakhan houses had a few more curlicues. Although the history of Astrakhan ran back a thousand years or more, there was hardly a sign that it had existed before 1860. I found that typical of the Russia I saw. A

wooden civilization leaves few landmarks. For generations wooden buildings have been thrown up, lived in, burned down and new ones erected in their place. I know of no where except the United States or Australia where monuments of the past are so scarce.

I did not know this then, of course, as I jolted, bug-eyed, through the rutted Astrakhan streets in a dilapidated Russian bus. I was more interested in the blind violinist playing for alms on the wind-swept bridge, in the pair of smart young Red Army officers swishing up the street in a glittering cutter behind a pair of spanking grays, and in the almost total absence of automobiles and trucks.

Astrakhan was a rear-area town. It was shabby and threadbare. You could see that its sacrifice to the war was to give its men to the Red Army, to work even longer hours in the war factories and to go on ever shorter rations to feed the men at the front. It looked, and was, tired and worn.

One thing I noticed after a two-hour hike around town. I saw only one person in Astrakhan who did not have good, warm footwear. This was an old peasant woman who wore a pair of bedroom slippers over two or three pairs of heavy wool socks. Every other person wore either *valinki*—the felt boots which are the warmest thing ever devised for cold weather—or good, stout leather boots. I had seen enough of Africa and the Middle East to know that shoes were a No. 1 criterion.

This, then, was Russia. We wandered around Astrakhan until darkness fell and the cold began to nip our cheeks. We saw the air-raid shelters dug around the Orthodox church, and the places where bricks had been tumbled out of the naves and wings to provide rubble for the roofs of the shelters. We saw the bullet-scarred kremlin—scars dating from 1917. And we saw two old women begging for alms from the stream of factory workers that filled the sidewalks

to the curb. We were followed by a dozen school children who had never seen foreigners before.

And, when we got back to our hotel, we found a full-blown crisis. Astrakhan was not a regular overnight stop on the airline. Before we had left Tehran we had purchased meal tickets at a cost of \$24, in case we had to halt at Baku. But, the worried hotel manageress advised us, the tickets were not good in Astrakhan. We must pay for our meals in rubles. Rubles, of course, were something which none of us had. They could be had in the Tehran black market at 80 to 100 to the dollar, against the official rate of five to the dollar and the diplomatic rate of twelve to the dollar. But there was a very strict Russian rule against importing currency.

So—we had no money to pay for our dinner, and our tickets were no good. It looked like an impasse. Finally, Werth, who was our interpreter, confided, *sub rosa*, that he actually had two or three hundred rubles which he had tucked away against just such an emergency when he left Moscow. Meanwhile, our hotel manageress telephoned frantically to various officials, and finally obtained permission to accept our meal coupons. Over dinner and a bottle of vodka she waxed mellow. This was not the first time she had faced such a crisis. The last time the question had arisen was when the Archbishop of York had come through on his way to Moscow.

"He is a real gentleman," she said. "It was a pleasure to have him as a guest in Astrakhan."

"How was that?" we asked.

"He was like you," she said. "He had no money to pay for his meals. But he is an honorable gentleman. He promised that as soon as he got to Moscow he would send back money to pay his bill. And he did just that. Two days after he had left, a British courier stopped off and settled

the bill. There can be no doubt—the Archbishop is a real gentleman and a true friend of Soviet Russia.”

We toasted the Archbishop We toasted Anglo-Russian relations, we toasted American-Russian collaboration, we toasted Astrakhan, we toasted the Intourist hotel of Astrakhan and the manageress of the Intourist hotel of Astrakhan. We toasted victory and the defeat of the fascist foe.

We asked the manageress what she thought of the way the war was going

“You must know,” she said, “that the Germans are very, very strong They sent their planes to raid Astrakhan. They dropped their bombs here. They thought that the Volga was theirs. *Da, da*, the Germans are very strong and very powerful But we the Russians are very clever We the Russians are very cunning. We have beaten the Germans . . .”

The next morning when we left our hotel to take the bus to the Astrakhan airport the snow was falling so heavily that I could not see across the street The manageress laughed, and promised she would have hot tea waiting for us when we got back from the airport. Out at the airport the snow was heavier and the wind higher—like an old-fashioned blizzard in Chicago. I estimated that we had visibility of possibly 150 yards on the ground. There was no ceiling—just a mass of swirling snowflakes Our Soviet pilot, however, packed us into the plane, mounted into the cockpit, turned over the engines possibly three times, and shouldered the plane down and off the field as though it were a June day in Kansas.

He was completely right We flew fifteen minutes through the snowstorm and came out into the clear. Somehow, I had not the slightest worry about our take-off, despite my concern of the day before. For one thing, I had taken a good look at the pilot. Under his loose flying-jacket I saw a whole row of Russian medals and ribbons, including that of Hero

of the Soviet Union. He was, I had learned, a veteran of nearly twenty years' experience in Russian civil airways flying. It seemed to me that if he took off into this white blindness he knew what he was doing. He probably had flown through much worse weather. And, whatever the weather and whoever the pilot, we now had good solid land to come down to.

I hugged the window of the plane as we flew up the Volga, and until we had almost reached Stalingrad I saw no evidence that we were coming to a city. Then, suddenly, on the snowy ground I began to see a tracery of zigzag trenches and a blossoming pattern of shell holes. The nearer we got to Stalingrad, the more intricate the trenches and the more general the shell-hole patterns.

At ten minutes before ten o'clock on the morning of January 14, 1944, I stepped onto the hard, frozen soil of Stalingrad. It had been won by the Red Army almost a year before. Now it was a sharp, clear winter day and the wind was sweeping across the airport, whipping under my parka. I quickly pulled the hood over my fur cap. The pale-blue sky seemed to be made of ice, and I could hardly credit the pilot when he told me that it was fifteen degrees above zero, Fahrenheit. I would have guessed fifteen below.

The snow was patchy on the Stalingrad airfield, and my heels rang on the frozen earth as I stamped up and down to keep warm. A couple of hundred yards distant there were some low log huts—the airport administration buildings—and from their chimneys came thin columns of smoke. I saw half a dozen switch engines in the Stalingrad yards, puffing away and sending into the air belches of white steam and black smoke. I saw no other evidence of life—nothing but block after block of rubble, outlined only by the streets, with all that lay within the quadrangles broken into rubble or skeletons of walls. From the air, at least, I

could see no smoking chimneys, no moving traffic, not even the little black ants which from the air mean people walking on the ground.

There was great excitement on the plane as we approached Stalingrad. For an hour before we came to the city the Russian passengers had been craning their necks at the windows. When one of them sighted the first trench system outside the city, he shouted: "Stalingrad—Stalingrad, *geroya gorod* (hero city)!" I didn't know what he was saying, exactly, but I thought I knew what he meant—and I thought I understood what he felt.

I knew what they thought of Stalingrad in London's East End. I had talked to survivors in the blitz desert of Commercial Road. I had seen the faded banners in yellow and red that still sagged around the little brick house where Lenin lived when he was studying at the British museum. Those signs said, simply: "They Gave Us Quiet Nights." Some of them merely said. "Quiet Nights." "They" were the Russians. "They" were the Red Army. "They" were the defenders of Stalingrad. Stalingrad . . . *hero city*.

What I saw was a dead city—it had given its life that Russia might live. The great plants and industries were nothing but heaps of brick and dust. The Red October factory, darling of the five-year plans, was quite neatly outlined by its walls. And this, of course, was nearly a year after the famous victory.

Other cities gave without measure during the war. London is one. London gave all that was asked, and would have come back for more, had there been need. But no one who saw Stalingrad could doubt that Russia had given more of her blood and of her flesh. London's City was burned out. The Temple was gone. The Wren churches had been destroyed. What was more important—the great docks and cranes which made London the Port of London, the vast

warehouses and storage tanks and bins had been erased. But London still functioned as a city. Stalingrad did not. Stalingrad had given everything for Russia.

Standing on the icy battleground, I tried to imagine what it must have been like when the fight was on. Over on one side of the field was a trench system, and just beyond was a pit where a tank had been dug in as a strongpoint. In the corner there was a pillbox. I thought of the men and women who had huddled in these trenches and pillboxes, motionless and alert, with winds slowly numbing their hands and their arms and their bodies—and of the colder winds, much colder winds, which had frozen them night after night. This was sacred soil on which I was standing, made so by the blood of many brave men and women.

I walked around in the snow, kicking at the earth with my boots, until the pilot called us to get back aboard the plane. Occasionally my boot would hit metal—a shell fragment or a machine-gun clip, solidly frozen in the icebound field.

I spent many months in Russia, with impression succeeding impression until they were superimposed, one upon the other, like a double exposure. But Stalingrad remained sharp and clear, with the sharpness of a knife and the clearness of a mountain stream. Everything else I saw in Russia was merely explanatory.

Some months after I had arrived in Russia I happened to meet a couple of young Red Army tank men. They were wearing the green ribbon which was issued to the defenders of Stalingrad.

"That was a tough battle," I said to them.

"*Puzhalista*," they said. "It was hard, but we won."

"How long have you been in the Red Army?" I asked.

"From the start."

"What was your toughest fight?"

They hesitated a moment and discussed that between themselves.

"When the Germans first attacked," they said. "Undoubtedly, that was the worst time."

"But—" I said, "Stalingrad?"

They shrugged their shoulders in a superior, youthful shrug.

"We *won* Stalingrad," they said.

The Land of the Soviets

I

The Moscow blackout was heavy, and the towers of the Kremlin threw a blacker shadow against the sky. In the murk of the gardens along the high flanking wall there was a hubbub and a chatter such as I had never heard before. Not a human hubbub, however. It was the Kremlin crows settling themselves for the night—thousands of them, the great gray-and-black crows of the East, whirring through the cold and darkness and cawing like all the restless spirits of Russia in the aeries of the ancient walls and jumble of buildings inside the citadel.

That noon in late January, 1944, the press department of the Foreign Office had telephoned and invited me to the meeting of the Supreme Soviet at 7 P.M. This was exciting news. It meant a view of the inside of the Kremlin and, probably of Stalin. It also meant, although I failed to realize it, that I would see a cross-section of Russia and its Government.

The vastness and complexity of Russia are hard to visualize. You can read that there are some 180 different national groups and tribes in the U.S.S.R. or that there were, in early 1939, some 170,000,000 people in the country. But the figures do not give much of a picture. You can estimate that the incorporation of eastern Poland, Moldavia, Bukhovina, the Baltic States and Karelia boosted the population to nearly 200,000,000 before the Germans attacked. But you can not visualize 200,000,000 people in your mind's eye.

Nor can you visualize what war has done to the Russian population. Stalin, I understand, estimates the war loss in

population at 25,000,000 lives. That, too, is just statistics. It does not show you how the Germans applied their "scientific" plans for the extermination of civilian population, nor the bodies of the men and women of the Red Army who died in Stalingrad, nor the slave girls who died in Germany, nor the typhus victims in Smolensk, nor the children in the gas wagons of the Caucasus, nor the old women who dropped dead in the snows of White Russia. Nor can statistics show you the baby pictures of the children who were not born because of war. They can not tell you the names of the fourteen-year-olds in the steel mills of Magnitogorsk who were too tired to hear the alarm bell when the traveling crane started to move. I had come to Russia too recently to have much of a picture of this as I walked toward the Kremlin, lugging my portable typewriter and treading gingerly in the darkness in the icy ruts of the Moscow sidewalks.

As I approached the ancient Korovitskaya gate in the middle of the Kremlin wall away from the Moskva river, I could see huge floodlights illuminating the driveway which led up an incline to the hulking medieval gate. Dozens of gray-coated NKVD troops flanked the driveway and clustered around the barrier where all delegates and spectators were halted for inspection of their passes.

I was concerned about my portable typewriter. I had no idea whether they would let me take it inside and, in view of the strictness of Russian security, I had left the hotel almost an hour early, as a time allowance for possible argument and trouble. To my surprise the guards studied my *propusk* (pass) carefully, but did not even look at the typewriter. I could just as well have had a bomb or a revolver concealed inside the imitation-leather case. I might have had more trouble getting into the Capitol in Washington than I had in entering the Kremlin.

Inside the gate a curving road led up a slight incline past a massive building which still bore remnants of the elaborate camouflage with which the Kremlin had been daubed at the beginning of the war. At about every hundred yards guards were stationed, all with bayoneted rifles. From the gate to the Supreme Soviet chamber my pass was inspected six times by solemn-faced Red Army men.

The session was held in ancient St. Andrew's hall, which in Czarist days had been lushly furnished in blue and gold as one of the showrooms of the palace. Now the walls are soft cream, with pale-yellow curtains masking the windows. It is a long, comparatively narrow hall, with a sixty-foot ceiling, and when I arrived there was only a sprinkling of delegates on the floor. At one end was the Presidium platform, above which the Soviet hammer and sickle had been embossed in white on the proscenium arch. To the rear of the platform, in a circular recess, was a statue of Lenin. Just below the embossed hammer and sickle was a round, purely utilitarian clock.

At five-minute intervals leading up to seven P.M., a warning bell rang to hurry the delegates to their seats, and now, from the tiny press box perched about midway back in the hall, I had a bird's-eye view of Russia. There was the huge chunk of the Russian Republic—far and away the largest bloc, and occupying nearly half the seats. There was a fairish number of women in this group, although the proportion of women in the chamber as a whole is low—a little more than one in ten. About a quarter of the delegates were in uniform. I was surprised at this small proportion, until it occurred to me that many of the delegates in the Red Army and other branches of service had doubtless been unable to leave their posts at the front. There was nothing unusual about the Russian delegation. Physically, they looked like a cross-section of any Moscow crowd . . . many

broad-featured, high-cheekboned Slavs and a fair sprinkling of the handsome, blond Nordic types which are common around Leningrad—people who look and are, originally, of Scandinavian origin.

Next largest was the Ukraine delegation. Here was a touch of color—a good many of the men wore the white tieless shirts with blue embroidered piping which are part of their national dress. A bit smaller than the Ukrainian was the White Russian group, indistinguishable physically or in dress from the Russians. I made no attempt to pick out the Letts, the Lithuanians, the Karelian Finns, etc. It was the Asiatic group which stood out. There was a group of five Kazakh women with flaring hoodlike head-dresses and their black hair in plaits. They looked like Chinese. There was an Uzbek woman, coppery-hued, who wore a native gown something like a sari and who had not let pregnancy interfere with attendance at the Supreme Soviet. Many of the women from the Ukraine and White Russia had fine white or black woolen shawls draped around their shoulders. There were Yakuts in their wonderfully soft elkhide or sealskin boots, Uzbek men with their curious embroidered *tibyataka* or skullcaps, Caucasians with their beautiful embroidered smocks and hand-worked silver belts.

By the stroke of seven all the delegates were in their places. The press box was crowded by now, and one of the Japanese correspondents had shoved in and was practically sitting in my lap. I composed a trial cable: "Jap in lap shall I yap," but I decided the censors probably would not think it very funny. On second thought, I did not think it was funny either.

The hall is three-quarters of a block long and acoustics, even with an amplifier, are poor. Earphones are provided for each seat. The earphones were installed when the old palace was modernized about ten years ago. The whole

thing was done over, inside and out—woodwork, lighting, elevators, decoration. There are indirect lighting fixtures of chrome, fine light oak and ash inlaid floors, and elevators such as you would find in any new New York office building.

At one minute past seven the members of the Presidium started to file onto the platform, scattering to their seats. Below the Presidium and at the right and left a battery of twelve klieg lights flooded the stage. Six movie cameramen cranked furiously. The members walked in casually, and bringing up the rear was Stalin. Just ahead of him were Kaganovich and Mikoyan, Commissars of Heavy Industry and Foreign Trade. I did not notice Stalin until he had taken half a dozen steps onto the platform. He was walking slowly like an old bear and rubbing his hands as though he was about to get down to work.

Suddenly the crowd spotted him and rose, cheering and clapping. Stalin paused and stood almost shyly at the very rear of the platform, resting one arm on the back of a seat. As the applause died away, he moved over to the left and sat down, casually stroking his chin. He was wearing his usual beige uniform with a single medal, the Order of Lenin, on his breast. In the purplish light of the kliegs the uniform looked brownish khaki.

I jotted down a little log of what Stalin did the first time I saw him. He walked in at 7:03 P.M. At 7:05, he ended the ovation by crossing to the left side and sitting down alone. Discussion of the budget opened immediately. A minute later Stalin moved over next to Molotov on the right side of the platform. At 7:08 he started to read through a sheaf of notes. At 7:13 Molotov nudged him, and they whispered together briefly. At 7:15 Stalin handed his papers over to Molotov, who started running through them rapidly. Stalin sat quietly listening to the details of the budget. At 7:17 P.M., Molotov leaned over, and they whispered

until they were interrupted by an ovation for Stalin, touched off when the Speaker mentioned his name. At 7:21 P.M., he leisurely scratched his head. Four minutes later he squirmed in his seat. Three minutes later he got up quietly, and unobtrusively walked off the platform.

The Supreme Soviet is the Russian equivalent of our Congress; but with many differences. There had been no public advance notice that it was assembling, yet everyone in Moscow knew that the delegates had come to town. They arrived at the main hotels, and outside each hotel appeared an NKVD trooper to stand guard. In our hotel, the Metro-pole, at the main entrance, a revolving doorway which had been sealed up for the winter was suddenly unsealed and put into use—apparently in honor of the delegates.

Since there had been no notice of the meeting, there naturally was no advance discussion in the press of the reasons for it. But all Moscow had been gossiping. A favorite rumor was that the Communist Party would be abolished. This fantastic idea was seriously discussed in many foreign embassies, and at least one embassy which should have known better cabled such a forecast to this side of the Atlantic. Another rumor which won a good deal of support among the Russians, I gathered, was that the assemblage would abolish the terms "Commissar" and "Commissariat" and substitute "Minister" and "Ministry"—a change which would have been of great symbolic importance.*

This speculation had finally been laid to rest by a little note which appeared inconspicuously in the press the day before we were invited to attend the meeting of the Supreme Soviet. It said that the Central Committee of the Communist Party had met and proposed that the Union Republics (Russia, the Ukraine, White Russia, Uzbekistan,

* The last pass I received from the NKVD was stamped "Ministry" of Home Affairs rather than "Commissariat."

etc.) be allowed to set up their own foreign offices and their own defense commissariats. The proposal set the tongues of all the diplomats and correspondents in Moscow wagging. It was a radical move, and the significance of it was by no means clear. The first reaction of the not-too-well-informed diplomats was that it was a Russian device to obtain additional seats at the peace conference and in any postwar successor to the League of Nations.

While, as a matter of fact, just such a proposal was raised nearly a year later by Marshal Stalin at Yalta when he asked that the Ukraine and White Russia be admitted to membership in the United Nations Organization in recognition of their war effort, it did not seem to me that this was the main objective of the change. If you examine the actions of the Soviet Government closely, you will see that there is almost always more than one motive behind every major step—and the creation of the separate defense and foreign relations commissariats for the Union Republics is, I think, an excellent example of this.

II

The Soviet structure represents a neat and rather delicate balance of the vital forces of the country in which the Communist Party holds the position of leadership. The party is the inner core of the government, of industry, of the army. It provides the leadership, the driving force and spark which vitalize the great Russian mass—which is traditionally divided into workers, peasants and intelligentsia.

The war has had a cataclysmic effect upon Russia. Quite naturally the mobilization of everything in the country—men, women, industry and resources—behind the Red Army disturbed the balance of the state. While formerly the party was the nursery and the cocoon of leadership, for four years the Army has to a great extent taken over this function.

The best blood of Russia has gone into the Army and here, sometimes against a more military than party background, new leaders have emerged. Now, regardless of the impression which Americans may have of the Communist Party's objectives, its methods within Russia, and its thinking, are guided by a philosophy of conservatism.

The party leaders recognize very clearly that the Army is a vast and to a considerable extent new social force within the Soviet state. They are constantly working to fuse this force into the postwar Soviet pattern. Bright youngsters who have come up through the Red ranks have been invited into the party. Bravery on the battlefield brought almost automatic invitations to join the coveted inner circle, the party. Party membership has very nearly tripled during war-time, now reaching the unprecedented figure of 5,800,000—which is considerably more than three times the membership at the last party congress in 1939. At that time, not yet recovered from the decimation of the "purge," the rolls showed 1,600,000 names. It is a reasonable guess that at least 5,000,000 of the present party members have joined up since June 22, 1941. For all practical purposes it is a new party—except for the leadership. No group in Russia suffered war casualties as did the party. Its men and women were the heroes of the battlefield and of partisan warfare. Party membership was a death warrant, in case of capture by the Germans.

The new members are Army men and women and, to a much lesser extent, crack industrial workers and collective farmers whose labors kept the Red Army in the field. By bringing in the young Army leaders, the noncommissioned heroes and those who won their spurs under fire, the party has sought to identify itself with the strongest force of war-time Russia—the Red Army. But when defense commissariats for each of the sixteen Union Republics were set up,

the problem of the Red Army as a social force was attacked from a different angle. Sixteen semi-autonomous forces, obviously, constitute a much more digestible mass, socially, than one vast amorphous body into which the bulk of the brains and talent of the Soviet Union has been gathered together.

I think this was what the Soviet leaders had in mind when they advanced their new proposal. Partly, of course, they wanted to increase the stature and responsibility of the constituent states—to lay more emphasis on the federal nature of the Soviet Union. But, in part, it was insurance. As for the foreign commissariats, the full implications of that move are still, perhaps, not too clear. But, basically, I believe the Soviet Foreign Office desired to introduce more flexibility into Russia's relations with the outside world, and to encourage development of local responsibility—a quality which has been blighted by the strong centralization of the Soviet system. In any case these were the measures which had caused the calling of this session of the Supreme Soviet. None of the rumors which titillated the fancy of some of the embassies came to pass.

A note here about the Kremlin. The word *kremlin* in Russian means "citadel," and there is not just one kremlin, that in Moscow, as I had supposed in my ignorance. There is a kremlin, or citadel, in almost every old Russian city of any size.

The Moscow Kremlin is a walled area of somewhat less than a square mile of land. Inside it is a jumble of buildings—ancient palaces and chapels of the Czars, modern office buildings, theaters, schools, barracks, little fir-lined parks, shrines, winding quiet lanes and apartments. The Kremlin fronts on the Moskva river, and on the opposite, or city side, there is a pleasant park with flowers and benches and shade trees which in summer is filled with children and

their mothers and where in winter timid skiers practice on the gentle slopes.

A regiment or two of guards are quartered within the citadel's high rose-colored brick walls, and several thousand Kremlin workers with their wives and families live inside the compound. Most high officials of the Government have their homes and offices there, but many have second offices in their commissariat buildings, which are scattered around Moscow just as the big Washington government offices are scattered around the capital. In normal times the Kremlin is open to sightseers, but during the war it was probably the best guarded square mile in the world, bristling with NKVD troops and antiaircraft installations.

When the war began, the Kremlin was drenched with what undoubtedly was the world's fanciest camouflage. Silhouettes of houses and trees were painted in every color of the rainbow on the normally chaste cream-and-rose walls of the buildings. Even the expanse of the Red Square and the other large areas of pavement around the Kremlin were daubed in vast geometric patterns, and the gilt of the Oriental domes and baroque towers inside the Kremlin was spattered with dirty gray and green paint. The effect must have been startling when the paint was first applied, but it is unlikely that any aviator ten or twenty thousand feet over Moscow could ever have been in doubt as to the Kremlin's location, pinpointed by bridges across the gleaming Moskva river.

By the time I reached Moscow the camouflage was on its last legs. It had flaked off in huge patches, and was in the final stages of decay. By that time a small crew of workmen, equipped with a couple of sandblast hoses, were busy removing the daubs from the principal Moscow buildings, but it may be years before the last vestiges are gone. The crews were so small, their equipment so scanty and the camou-

flage so extensive that it took them four months to clean up one building, the blocklong Moscow Soviet building.

The favorite daily stroll for foreigners in Moscow was the turn around the Kremlin. But not for Russians. They enjoyed lolling in the sun in the Kremlin gardens, and I have seen half a dozen six-year-old girls gathering buttercups on the steep bank right under the frowning Kremlin wall. But many Russians felt nervous about walking in such close proximity to the Kremlin. I asked them why, and they said: "It is not a good thing to do." I think, actually, this feeling arose because of the severity of the security precautions in the vicinity of the Kremlin. The guards did not encourage loitering.

The touchiness of the Kremlin guards was illustrated at the sessions of the Supreme Soviet. The foreign correspondents instructed their couriers to wait just outside the Korovitskaya gate. Our plan was to run our dispatches from the session chamber down to the gate. Then the couriers would take them to the post office, to be cabled abroad. But when the couriers assembled at the gate the NKVD guards chased them away. They offered no reason—just told the girls that they could not stand there, and that if they did they would be arrested. The couriers finally were forced back nearly half a mile from the gate, over to the Lenin Library subway station. That meant that every piece of copy which was sent out of the Supreme Soviet required a run of nearly a mile.

A little later, a meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic was held. This time entrance was through the clock tower gate of the Kremlin, the one on Red Square.

We told our couriers to wait outside the clock tower.

"Oh," they said, "we can't do that."

"Why?" I asked.

"You can't wait in Red Square," one said.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Oh," the courier said, "I know you can't. Nobody could wait in Red Square. They would be arrested."

Actually, however, the couriers were mistaken. They not only were allowed to wait at the clock tower gate, but the NKVD guards let them come into their little guardroom to keep out of the cold.

A session of the Supreme Soviet is a good place to observe the differences between the Russian Government and ours. The Supreme Soviet is the Soviet "Congress"—it is the Russian legislative body. But you have only to watch it for an hour or so to see how essentially it differs from an American or English legislative body.

The shape of the hall is one clue. It is an oblong rectangle, 130 feet long and 70 feet wide. Naturally, the delegates are not grouped by parties—there is only one party in the U.S.S.R., the Communist Party. Instead, they are grouped by regions, just as delegates sit by States at an American political convention. Each Union Republic has a standard to mark its bloc of seats. And the number of delegates at a joint session—it is a bicameral body consisting of the Council of Nationalities and the Union Council—is about that of a Democratic or Republican convention—some 1,100.

The procedure is formal and fixed. Unlike Congress, where a Senator or Representative may pop up at any moment and talk on any subject under the sun, the schedule of the Soviet is carefully worked out in advance. Nominating and seconding speeches are assigned to appropriate delegates. Various persons are instructed to introduce legislation and to second it. The day the meeting opens it is known just how long the session will last and on what day it will close. Generally speaking, the procedure resembles that of a meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers, each

day with its full schedule of speeches, exhibits and entertainment.

Proceedings are run by the Presidium. This is a sort of steering committee, and its members sit on a raised platform, separated from the delegates by a railing. The Presidium includes the Soviet Commissars, the Central Committee, the Politburo—all the prominent figures in the Government. Most of them sit at their desks as the speaking program drones on, day and night, but they pay little heed to the speeches. They are all busy, overworked men. They bring their work to the meetings, and while discussion is in progress they are deep in their files and correspondence. Clerks and messengers frequently slip in and out with important communications and orders. What is going on is not debate but discussion.

In discussing the budget, the delegate of the Uzbek Republic may appeal for a larger grant of funds for local reclamation work. He mentions a figure substantially larger than that given in the preliminary budget. A Ukraine delegate may ask for more money for rehabilitating industry in the Donbas. There will be no rejoinder from the finance commissariat which has prepared the budget, but when the final, revised budget is presented it will be found that the various appropriations have been modified somewhat, to take account of these local demands. It will then be passed unanimously without further discussion. Some critics claim that even these changes are prepared in advance but, naturally, there is no way of telling.

There is a story of uncertain validity about a disagreement which arose in the Supreme Soviet some years ago, before the war. The delegates had been in session for a long time one afternoon. A motion was made to hold another session that night. A delegate arose and said: "Comrades, we have all been working very hard. There have been many

night sessions. Many of us have never been to Moscow before, and we should like a chance to go to the ballet or the opera. Let us skip this night session, and meet again in the morning."

By this time another delegate was tugging at the comrade's coattails, and he sat down hurriedly. A moment later the proposal to meet again that night was approved—unanimously. Decisions of the Supreme Soviet are always like that—unanimous.

I attended a number of sessions, and during those sessions many proposals were voted upon and approved. But I never saw a vote. Perhaps my eyes were not quick enough. That was what I thought the first time it happened. The chairman put a question, and a moment later announced that it had been unanimously adopted. I had been looking squarely at the delegates at the time, and if one of them had so much as flicked an eyelash I had not seen it. This made me curious, and I watched half a dozen different votes. It was always the same, and always the vote was unanimous—but never was there a call for ayes and noes or for a show of hands.

If this type of legislation sounds strange to Anglo-Saxon ears, I assure you that our procedure sounds equally strange to Russian ears. Since this statement reaches deep into a fundamental difference between us and the Russians, I think it is worth explaining:

Our legislators meet. A proposal comes before them. There is a difference of opinion, which is debated publicly. Eventually a vote is taken, at which sides are chosen and the proposal is either passed or defeated, depending upon the division of votes. Such debates occur in Russia, too. But they do not occur in the legislative body. They occur in the inner councils where the government's policy is being formulated—within such agencies as the Politburo, the

party central committees or the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Within such groups there may be differences and disagreement. But a question will be fully debated here, a vote will be taken and the result is then binding upon all—much in the manner that a party caucus in the United States, at least theoretically, binds all members to follow a given course of action.

Party discipline is very strong in Russia. Once a decision is taken all members are bound to support it. Thus, when an agenda is placed before the Supreme Soviet it represents a completed program, predebated and predigested. All that remains is for the Soviet to ratify it. And that, as a matter of fact, is what it does.

This emphasis on what might be called “administrative” rather than “legislative” government is very strong in Russia, and it carries over into the judicial field as well. For example, when the Red Army arrested the sixteen Polish underground leaders a Russian official was asked what would be done with them. He said they would be placed on trial. He was asked what they would be charged with, and said that he did not know yet. Just who would be tried, he was asked. “The guilty ones,” he replied.

This sounds strange to Anglo-Saxon ears, because of our fundamental insistence upon the right of a man to a presumption of innocence until he has been found guilty by a jury of his peers.

III

When I was in Russia we were taken up to Smolensk at one time to attend an inquiry into the murder of some 11,000 Poles in the Katyn forest. The question at issue was whether the Poles had been killed by the Germans or by the Russians. I think there was no real doubt in the minds of the correspondents who went to Katyn that the job had

been done by the Germans. But our Anglo-Saxon hackles rose at the title of the commission which was conducting the inquiry. It was called: "The Special Extraordinary State Commission for Investigating the *German* Atrocity at Katyn Forest."

If this seems to put the cart before the horse, I can assure you that the Russians find it equally difficult to understand how or why we can place on trial a person who on the basis of known evidence may be perfectly innocent of the accusations made against him. In Russia a man does not, under the normal processes of Soviet law, go on trial unless he is guilty. The inquiry into guilt or innocence is an administrative procedure which comes before the trial. The trial merely ratifies the action which has gone before—just as the legislative bodies ratify the action which goes before. If a man is not convicted after being brought to formal trial it is a profound and real reflection upon the officials who have indicted him.

It is equally confusing to a Russian to read that Congress has refused to follow the recommendations of our President, or that violent debate in Congress and in the American press continues despite a Congressional or Presidential decision on a given course of action. After all it is a fundamental principle of communism that once a decision has been taken, all support it, no matter what their previous opinion.

Some months before the 1944 elections I was talking with a high Soviet official, one who is unusually well informed about American affairs. He was much interested in the forthcoming election, particularly as to whether Roosevelt would be re-elected. At that time—this was before the nominating conventions—I expressed some doubts over the outcome.

"Mr. Roosevelt has been in office a long time," I said.

"Many Americans are tired of him. Many of them would welcome a change, just for the sake of change itself. Then, too, a man can not be President so long without acquiring many enemies. Every decision he makes is bound to alienate some group, and in twelve years that adds up to a good many people."

The Russian listened thoughtfully.

"That is very interesting," he said. "What are the issues in the election?"

"There is no real issue," I said, "on foreign policy or the war, so far as I know. The big issues are the President's twelve years in office, the Fourth Term and the fact that people are tired of him."

"No, no," said the Russian, "that isn't what I mean—what are the serious issues, what ideological program will the Republicans advance?"

I said I couldn't tell him for certain, I had been away a long time, but that I supposed they would support the war and foreign policy and say they would do a better job than Mr. Roosevelt domestically.

"Ah," said the official. "Then there are no real issues"

"No," I told him, "the real issues are the ones I told you about. Twelve years in office, his domestic policy, Fourth Term—all that. That's what will win or lose the election."

The Russian looked at me as though he thought I was trying to beg the question "That can't be it," he said. "Roosevelt has been in office twelve years. His opponents accept his program. Where is the issue?"

At that point I gave up. It was apparent that the gap between our way and the Russian approach was too great to be bridged in an hour's conversation.

Later, I told another Soviet official, one who has had great contact with the Western world, about my conversation with his colleague. He sighed. "I know," he said. "I

have tried to explain such things, too. But it is very difficult. I think it is hard for you Americans to understand our system, even though you may have read much and studied before coming here. You must remember it is even harder for many of our people to understand your way of doing things. They have had far less time and opportunity to learn your ways—and there is much to learn.”

It is not uncommon for an American in Russia to attempt to describe to his Russian friends the workings of democratic procedures as we understand them. “Ah,” says the Russian, “but we have a democracy in Russia, too.” No, the American may insist, the Russian system is not democratic—it does not have free speech, free press, etc. The Russian will smile sadly at the foreigner’s ignorance. “In Russia,” he will say, “we have a better democracy.” And he will believe that too. Mostly this is sincere belief. Partly, of course, it may be local pride like that of a Moscow youngster. The youngster got to talking with an American sergeant who was sitting in a jeep outside a Moscow office

“*Amerikanski* jeep,” said the youngster, patting the vehicle.

“Yes,” said the sergeant.

“*Amerikanski* jeep is very good,” said the lad.

“Yes,” the sergeant agreed.

“*Amerikanski* jeep is very good,” repeated the kid, “but *Russki* jeep is better.”

IV

When I first went to Russia it was hard for me to remember that here was a bigger country than the U.S.A. Americans are not used to the idea that there is any place which is larger than America—places with more people, yes; but not with more space. In the United States we are used to thinking of ourselves as BIG. Our industrial production is

biggest. We make more automobiles than anyone else, we make more movies, we have more coal, more steel, more highways, more milk, more oil, more gold, more wheat, more airplanes, more railroads. We think of ourselves as The Big Country; and so does most of the rest of the world—except Russia.

When you look at the maps on the walls of Russian offices with the U.S.S.R. marked in bright scarlet, you suddenly get a different idea of Europe. Europe becomes a small, ragged peninsula jutting out from a great shoulder of land, rather like a bushy tail on a fat dog—and most of the dog is labeled U.S.S.R. The thought occurs to you that the tail has wagged the dog for a very long time. If, like the Russians, I had grown up looking at these maps I would be bound to feel that my country had inherited half the earth. As a matter of fact, Russia has inherited not half the earth but something less than one-sixth of the earth's surface. The United States plus Alaska is only half as big. I still find it hard to visualize the Russian space—facts like Moscow being closer by air to New York or Chicago than to Vladivostok. Or that there is ten hours' difference in time from Russia's western border eastward to the Bering straits.

You can find almost any kind of vista in Russia. Leningrad is like Paris. The Crimea is a strip of the Riviera, villas and all (but no international society). The Ukraine is Iowa or Nebraska with white, blue, yellow and pink houses. In Central Asia there is Southern California—even to the movie lots. And in Siberia you can find Butte, Montana, of the frontier days—except for the saloons and poker games. I have ridden for two days on the Moscow-Leningrad train without seeing a view I couldn't match from the window of a Soo train in northern Wisconsin. I have flown from Moscow to the Urals, and over the Urals deep into Siberia. And what was the country like? It was pine forests,

tamarack swamps, birch forests, crystal blue lakes, open meadows shoulder-deep in grass, small patches in the clearings—and more lakes and more streams. This is the heart of Russia, a land of forests and streams, of marshes and meadows, of open spaces and of distance. The American outlook on the world is conditioned by our elbow room. So is the Russian outlook, only more so. A hundred years ago American life and American thinking were conditioned by our great continental forest. Today that is gone. But in Russia the forest is still there, and in this forest most Russian families have lived for many generations.

Flying north to Moscow in winter I saw the line where the forest begins. About an hour and a half of flying time south of the capital the land changes from a vast sea of white to an endless sea of dark green. The forest reaches for probably a thousand miles north and south, and it runs for some six or seven thousand miles from west to east. While I was in Moscow I was always conscious of the forest. I thought of it in winter, when from the gloomy window of my hotel room I peered down into the courtyard and saw half a dozen quilt-coated Russian women, hacking away at the firewood. I thought of it as I watched the battalions of girls rattling by in trucks, bound for the forest and a day's work, cutting wood. I thought of it when I hiked across the breadth of the Red Square and smelled the wood smoke of a thousand chimneys in my nostrils. And I thought of it when I studied how the five-year plans provided wood-burning power plants for the Moscow region.

The striking thing about the forest is the way it laps right at the edges of Russia's capital. I have often ridden to the end of the marble-walled Moscow subway, boarded a dingy Moscow trolley-bus, bumped along for a mile or two through the thinning out factories and potato patches and—arrived at the forest.

An excellent British general was sent to Moscow during the war—a man who had learned to speak Russian in a German prison camp during World War I. As a gesture of collaboration the British wanted to give the Russians something that would be really appreciated. They decided to give their ally the Bailey bridge. In the Western war the Bailey bridge had been very handy. It was a knockdown affair, coming in easily assembled sections.

The general packed the blueprints in his luggage, and prepared to offer them to the Russians at some propitious moment. Soon after he came to Moscow the Russians invited him to visit the front. He spent a couple of weeks with the Red Army; and when he came back he smiled ruefully. "You know," he said, "we traveled a great deal at the front, sometimes 150 or 200 miles a day. One day we came up to a river which the Red Army had just reached. The Germans had blown up the bridge. We pulled off the road and watched. These were combat troops. They had just chased the Germans across the river. Now, they had to get across, themselves."

While the general watched, the Red Army men drew their axes. They glanced up at the trees along the river, then—without an order—they went to work. In almost less time than it takes to tell they had trees toppled across the water and were hewing other trees (without hand measurement) into cross timbers and flooring. The bridge was built before a Western army could have got word back to the engineers to come forward.

"Well," I said to the general, "was it heavy enough—would it take their transport?"

"It took everything they had," the general said. "And they had tanks."

"But how did it compare with the Bailey bridge?" The general smiled. "I haven't mentioned the Bailey bridge to

them," he said. "What I'd really like is to get them to send us some men to teach our people how to build bridges so easily and so fast."

After their people's six centuries of life in the forest there are few Russians who are not handy with an ax, a saw or a plane. I have never seen really good Russian concrete work, but I have never seen better wooden construction. This is the heritage of the Russians from the forest; but the Soviet Union is not just Russians. True, the Russian Republic is the giant among the sixteen federated states, covering a good 60 percent of the Soviet map and accounting for two-thirds of the population. But before the war the emphasis officially had always been on "Soviet" rather than "Russian" deeds.

War changed that. More and more in *Krasnaya Svezda* and *Pravda* the headlines frankly said: *Russian* troops defeat Hitlerites, or *Russian* workers exceed norm by 150 percent. The emphasis shifted to *Russian* history and *Russian* heroes, Peter the Great, Kutuzov, Suvarov, Ivan, Catherine, and even one of the few competent Russian commanders of World War I, Brusilov. With the chips down, credit was paid where credit was due. Not all the Soviet nationalities made an equal contribution to the war effort. Some Tatars in the Crimea preferred to cultivate their vineyards, sit in the sun and drink wine, turning their backs on the wonderful guerrilla terrain in the mountains. And some of the Caucasus mountaineers did the same. But never was there any doubt of the *Russians*.

Temperamentally and culturally there are deep differences between the many races which inhabit the vast reaches of the Soviet. Nowhere are the differences more marked than between the first cousins, the "little Russians" or Ukrainians, and the "Great Russians" of the north. Even when they live together the differences persist. Out in a

Urals town I saw a Russian house, typical, unpainted, made of logs, rather bleak and dreary. The windows were uncurtained and the yard was neglected. Next door was a Ukrainian house, painted bright blue and yellow. There were starched curtains at the windows and flowers growing in window pots.

Nearly 1,100 years of divided history lie behind those differences. The Ukraine was ruled by a progressive dynasty when the rest of Russia was tracked only by daring hunters. The Ukraine is warm and fertile. It is the granary of Russia. Greeks came there to trade, and left behind the names of cities. Constantinople sent its monks. Jews and Egyptians came to trade. Finally, Tatars scourged the land, killing the people and burning the cities—but when the wave receded the Ukraine bloomed again.

But in Great Russia life has been grim for generations. The soil where the potato patches have been hacked out of the forests is no more fertile than the similar marginal cut-over area of northern Minnesota. And the climate of Russia and Siberia is severe—though not so severe as I had imagined.

Russia lies in the center of a great land mass, and the weather is pretty much the same as in the center of our continent. The steppes bake in July just as do the prairies of North Dakota. But there is more snow in Moscow than in Chicago, for instance. All winter long in Moscow thousands of girls, old women and old men chop, chop, chop away at the ice and snow. I have seen them at work before the first light in morning, and they are still at it at 10 o'clock at night. Spring comes with a rush, about April 15. There is virtually no transition. One day winter ends, and before you have time to shed the heavy underwear and wool socks, youngsters in cotton shorts and shirts are laughing and playing in the Kremlin gardens.

Russia is not only a vast northern country, it is the only great nation that lives in both the West and the East. This is one of the most complex facts about the Soviet Union. Coming into Russia from the Middle East you feel that once more you are in the West, that here is a place where it is safe to drink the water again. Coming in from Europe you feel you stand on the border of the East. You are not too sure about the water.

Threads of Asia are woven deep into the Russian fabric. You see them in the bulbous monstrosity called St. Basil's Cathedral, which squats just outside the Kremlin's walls like a sultan's nightmare. You see them in the wild Asiatic orgy of *Bakhchi-sarai* at the Bolshoi theater ballet, and in the folk music which the Red Army boys play on their accordions. You notice that the market place is called a bazaar—and because the heritage of the East is so obvious and so easy to see, I believe it is hard not to exaggerate its importance.

What is important, I think, is that the capital of Russia has always been in Europe, and that for a thousand years Russian soil has been uncertain ground in the battle between the East and the West. Before recorded history the Slavs had spilled far to the west. In the time of Charlemagne they were at the Elbe. They had been thrust back; and when the Golden Horde struck, almost all of Russia went down under the Tatar impact. Six hundred years ago Moscow itself paid annual tribute to the ancestors of the Uzbek nation, whose name today is hardly known outside of Russia. When Western renaissance was at full bloom, when Western explorers were carting back the riches of the New World to London, Madrid and Amsterdam, Russians were still fighting for existence.

Not far from Moscow there is a famous and beautiful old monastery that dates from the 13th century. I used to en-

joy visiting it. It was a favorite resort of Russian artists, who liked to paint the soft rose, delicate blue and faded yellow of its buildings. The reason that monastery is standing today, and the only reason, is that its walls are twenty feet thick and its monks were warriors. They stood siege and beat off the attacks not only of the Tatars but of Poles and Swedes from the west. When Russia finally was able to stand on her own feet, western Europe had far outdistanced her. The restless Slavs spilled over to the east, not to the west.

There in the East, in Siberia, I saw the greatest similarity between Russia and America. When I stood on the banks of the River Ob in Siberia and watched a great white steamboat, black smoke billowing from its high stack, grandly churning up the wide stream between forests of pine and birch, a little tingle of recognition ran up my spine. This was an American kind of country. It could have been a steamboat plying the upper Mississippi in 1870 on the run from St. Louis to St. Paul. When I heard the Siberians talk about the plans they had for the years after the war—for building new factories, new homes for the workers, paved streets, a network of highways—it sounded like the talk of a bunch of bustling western civic boosters back home.

This was frontier country. Russia still has a frontier, a vast frontier, an empire of riches and resources, and Jim Hill or Jay Cooke would understand the gleam in their eyes when they talk of what they are going to build. The Russians must still take giant strides to overcome the dark centuries of Tatars and Czars.

A Very Formal People

I

One day I was walking down Gorki Street with a Russian friend. Gorki Street is something vaguely like the Fifth Avenue of Moscow. There were thousands of people crowding the sidewalk on their way home from work, but I was paying no particular attention to them. I was learning the Russian alphabet, and was puzzling out the signs of the shops as we strolled along. Suddenly, my companion said: "Did you notice that American we just passed?"

I looked back in the crowd but couldn't spot any American. "Who was it?" I asked.

"I don't know," the Russian said.

"How did you know it was an American?"

"Because of the way he walked."

That sounded silly to me, but after a little observation I saw what he meant.

The Russians don't walk like Americans. They have a different gait. A Russian can always tell an American, no matter how he is dressed, because of his walk. They can tell an Englishman, too. The difference is this. We walk with a natural, free-swinging stride. We take fairly long steps, our legs swinging at the hips, and our arms moving in rhythm. We swagger a little. The Russian takes smaller steps. He walks at a jerky uneven pace and his arms do not swing in stride. Somehow he seemed to me to walk as though going up a hill with a heavy burden on his back. The reason for this, as nearly as I could figure out, is that the average peasant of central Russia is considerably shorter than the average American. He or she has shorter legs and,

usually, a thick sturdy body with powerful hips and a broad pelvis.

Another time I was walking back from the Foreign Office to my hotel in the Moscow dimout, only a degree brighter than the British blackout. My secretary, a Russian girl, was with me. There were a good many people on the street, as there always were up to 1 A.M. curfew, and someone in the crowd was whistling.

"There goes an American," my secretary said.

"Don't be silly," I said. "How on earth can you tell that he's an American? Besides, that's a Russian song he's whistling."

"Oh," she said, "no Russian would whistle on the street. It isn't polite."

This seems like a trivial matter, but I think that it is out of just such trivia that a nation's way of doing things is constructed. And when you pile up enough of these differences you may have a gulf of misunderstanding which is hard to bridge.

I remember an indignant little man I met in London. He lived down in Kent and he worked with a fine, elderly firm in The City. When the first Americans were moved into his neighborhood in Kent, he was very eager to cement the bond of Anglo-American friendship. Not far from his house was a little pub where he used to drop in, of an evening, for a glass or two of beer. Some of the Americans began to come to the pub, and this gentleman thought he would do his bit by inviting them to drink with him. It took him several evenings to screw up his courage, but finally one night an American sergeant came in and stood beside him at the bar, and he asked the youngster to have one with him.

"And you know," he told me later, "he didn't say a word. He just nodded his head. And when Nora, the bar maid, put down our beers he just picked up his glass and drained

it. Didn't even say 'cheerio' or 'cheers' or 'God bless' or anything. It was the rudest thing I ever saw."

It did no good to tell this gentleman that in midwestern America, where his sergeant probably came from, it is not the custom to raise a glass and say "cheers" before downing a drink. So far as this man was concerned, the cause of Anglo-American amity could go hang. The way people drink or sing has a lot of bearing on the way they get along.

Whistling, singing—even humming—on the streets is regarded in Russia as a breach of good manners. That is true, so far as whistling is concerned, in many European countries. I suspect the Russian aversion to whistling, however, came in from the Orient, where the Arabs, the Persians and the Indians regard it as very vulgar.

That does not mean Russians do not sing in public. They do. But they must sing in groups, in organized fashion. The first singing I heard in Russia was at the dingy little hotel in Astrakhan. It was group singing. Outside it was snowing heavily, a wet thick blanket. Suddenly in the late evening from beyond the blackout curtains (we were roughly 1,500 miles from the nearest front) we heard the muffled sound of marching boots and the swelling chorus of a song. Out there in the blackout, with the heavy snow falling, was a Red Army regiment, roaring out the cadenced chorus of a song which I later learned to recognize, *Lubimi Gorod* (Beloved City), one of the most beautiful of Russia's war songs.

As we listened to the soldiers singing in the snow, I thought I had never heard anything more moving. Here was a Red Army unit, far to the rear, moving up, no doubt, to the railroad cars that would take them into action, moving up and ringing out their battle song.

Later on, I came to understand this incident somewhat better. The Hotel Metropole where I lived in Moscow was located cater-cornered across the street from Municipal

Bathhouse No. 1. I do not suppose there was a single night in Moscow that I failed to hear the choruses of Red Army men and Red Army girls ringing through the night—as they tramped through the square on their way to *Banya* No. 1 and a good hot shower. The Russians sing—when it does not offend the rules of etiquette—and they know their songs. A young Polish officer who had fought with the Red Army told me: “The Russians are incredible. They are amazing. They sing when they march. They sing when they go into battle. They sing after the battle.”

I was talking to a young Russian actress one time who had been in Murmansk and Archangel for six weeks performing in recreation centers which had been established in those port cities for American service men and merchant marine crews of the ships which were bringing war materials to Russia. She entertained both Russian and American audiences. It was the first time she had ever seen any Americans, and she had been greatly disappointed.

“I don’t know what’s the matter with the Americans,” she said. “They don’t seem to know how to entertain themselves. They don’t know the words to their songs, they can’t keep together on the choruses, and they act as though they had never sung together before.” Furthermore, she said, they had very few musical instruments, and those they had they played badly. And they seemed not to be able to recite poetry at all. In contrast, it appeared, the Russians were wonderful singers, great instrumentalists, fine reciters of verse. She was genuinely disappointed with the behavior of the Americans. She had heard so much about Americans, it was evident, that she expected them to be superior to Russians in every way.

I was nettled by her comment. I thought it was just another example of native pride—a trait which is much more prominent among Russians than you might imagine. But

it was evident, also, that the Americans had let her down. It wasn't the first time that I had run onto great expectations about the Americans—expectations which had not been fulfilled. It reminded me of a bitter disappointment which was suffered by the young ladies of northern England when the first Americans were billeted in their towns. The girls got the idea from the movies that all Americans were at least six feet tall and looked like Gary Cooper. When the Americans actually appeared, they were all shapes, sizes and varieties, and they definitely did not look like Gary Cooper. The English girls were not only disappointed, they were angry. They felt cheated.

The Russian actress felt just like the English girls. I offered a vague explanation about how Americans were not so used to entertaining themselves as the Russians were—that we listened to the radio, danced to professional orchestras, and went to the movies. But it made little impression; and, as a matter of fact, I felt, privately, that the Americans were pretty good at harmonizing.

Some months later I changed my mind. I was traveling out through the Urals and Siberia with Eric Johnston, the President of the United States Chamber of Commerce. We were being fêted at every town, and the climax of the program each night was a great banquet. After a suitable number of toasts, someone would call for a song, and the Russians would begin. They were wonderful. They all had good voices, and they knew how to sing together. They could sing five, ten, twenty—apparently an infinite number of songs—and sing them well.

Singing only Russian songs became embarrassing, and we felt that we should present a few American numbers for our hosts. We tried simple things like "Old Black Joe" and "My Old Kentucky Home." We would start out bravely, but after a line or two several of us would be back to "da-

da-da." By the time we wound up there would be one frail voice carrying the score and the rest of us self-consciously trying to skim over the tune. We tried current popular numbers. They were even worse. Three members of the party were recent arrivals from America and knew the current songs fairly well. The rest of us had been abroad too long to have more than a vague idea of the latest hits. We tried patriotic numbers and had the same trouble, even with "The Halls of Montezuma," which Eric knew because he had been in the Marines in the last war.

Johnston had a favorite number called "Poor Jenny," from one of the New York musical comedies. He has a photographic memory, and he had the words down pat. But even after he had sung it about a dozen times there were only a few of us who had the words. In addition, the melody was monotonous, by contrast with the rich Russian harmonies, and the song was so topical and slangy that Bob Magidoff, the NBC correspondent who was translating to the Russians, was only able to get over a vague idea of the lyrics.

In this crisis, we fell back on the most simple expedients. We found that one of the few songs we all could sing was "Three Blind Mice." That went over pretty well because the Russians sing rounds, too, and as soon as we had run through it two or three times they caught on and grinned. But the number that really bowled them over was Bill White's special—that famous American melody "My name is Yon Yonson, Aye Kom from Viskonsin, Aye verk in de lumber yards dere." Since there are only four lines to this song the entire party was able to sing it with only occasional lapses. Magidoff had no trouble in translating, and the Russians loved it.

During these banquets I was constantly reminded of the young actress's criticism. It was true. We Americans do not

sing like the Russians—and it seemed to me there was a good reason for this. In the Russian cities there are excellent spectator entertainment—fine plays, fine concerts, opera, ballet and movies, but rare indeed is the Russian who does not depend upon himself and his companions for his amusement and entertainment most of the time. His peasant cottage has no radio blaring forth all day long and into the evening. When his work is done, he does not sit down with his pipe and his paper and tune in a Soviet Bing Crosby. If he is not too tired from his long day, he takes down his accordion and joins his neighbors and they sing together and, perhaps, dance. So it has been for generations.

II

A friend of mine who knows the Russians very well, being of Russian birth himself and having lived in Russia frequently for several years at a time, is fond of saying in the course of discussions of Russian problems: "Never forget. The Russians are a very formal people." In this I think he is entirely correct.

Russia is a peasant country. Until recent times all but a very few Russians lived on the land, without schooling, and often in great poverty. They had the rough and ready manners which were natural to their way of life—the kind of manners you associate with the frontiersmen of Kentucky or Missouri. Social etiquette has more or less been imposed upon the Russians from the top. The most famous example of this, of course, was given by Peter the Great, who came back from western Europe and insisted on the boyars shaving off their beards. This was a symbolic act, designed to dramatize Peter's campaign for westernization of his backward country.

Peter it was, too, who issued the first Russian book of etiquette. It admonished his people to be modest, ami-

able, respectful, to look a man in the face when talking to him, to take off their hats indoors, not to spit on the floor, not to sing too loud, not to pick their noses nor wipe their mouths with their hands, not to lick their fingers or pick up a bone to gnaw, not to scratch their heads, dance in their boots or talk with their mouths full, and to learn foreign languages. The imprint of Peter's etiquette, like so many other things of Peter's, is plainly to be seen in Russia today.

The Red Army is almost as much of a crusader against beards as was Peter. I have seen Red Army barbers hard at work by candlelight before dawn on an icy winter morning and long after dark on a summer evening. And it was in the Red Army that I saw the closest parallel to Peter's rules of etiquette. The conduct of a Red Army officer is carefully regulated. He is not allowed to carry parcels under his arm on the street. He is not allowed to wear his *valinki* or felt boots when he is in Moscow or any other big city, and he must replace his felt shoulder tabs with the flaring dress uniform shoulder boards. If he is walking with a woman, he must not hold her arm or put his arm around her waist. (It is all right for her to take his arm.) He must walk on the woman's left at all times—indeed, this is the general Russian custom. When he goes to the theater, he must purchase tickets in accordance with his rank. Generals, for instance, may sit in the first six rows or in a box—but not further back. That would be degrading to their rank. Colonels may sit within the first twenty rows, but not further back, and so on. Even at the front Red Army men saluted as religiously as American officers outside the Pentagon building.

"Frankly," a Russian told me, "you Americans have very few manners." The Russians think we are sloppy. I know that they made me self-conscious about combing my hair. In every Russian building, there is always a big mirror in

the entry hall or anteroom. As soon as a Russian sees one of these mirrors he takes off his hat, whips out his comb and slicks back his hair. It is almost an automatic gesture. I had not been in Russia long before I found myself doing it too. I think there is a practical reason for this hair-combing. The winter is very long in Russia and for many, many months most Russians wear a fur cap. A man can not wear a fur hat for hours without mussing his hair—therefore, the mirrors and the combs.

I was riding on a suburban train one day with some Russian friends. We were going out to spend the day in the country, and I had in my pocket some chocolate bars and apples. When I passed them around, I ripped the paper off my chocolate bar and tossed it under the seat in the good old American day coach tradition. A moment later one of the Russians reached down and picked up the scrap of paper. I paid no particular attention, and when I had finished my apple, I tossed the core on the floor.

The Russians looked at me in great disgust. "You Americans!" one said, "you are perfect barbarians. Where are your manners? Don't you know better than to throw things on the floor?" I looked around and saw that my friends had wadded up the apple-core and the paper from the chocolate bars, and were sitting around patiently holding them in their hands.

"Well," I said, "what do you do with trash?"

"We keep it until we get off the train," they chorused, "and put it in the receptacle."

In the trains, in the street cars, in the subway and busses you never see scraps of paper. Even on the streets people are very careful to throw paper only in the trash cans. It just is not polite to do otherwise. The Russians are a clean people. They keep themselves clean, often enough, under the most difficult circumstances. This natural desire for

cleanliness created an unusual working hazard for me in Moscow. Like all the other correspondents, I had my office in a room at the Metropole Hotel. It was an ordinary hotel room in the Russian style. At one end was a green-curtained cubicle which contained a bed and some huge heaps of old newspapers which theoretically were waiting to be filed. Off the bedroom recess was a very small bathroom.

I had two Russian girls working for me as translators, and I noticed they had a good many friends who dropped in to call. These young ladies would stand around first on one foot and then on the other, conversing in Russian, and finally leave. Then one day when a girl came in about nine in the morning while I was in the midst of my daily perusal of the Moscow press my secretary screwed up her courage and tackled me.

"Do you mind if my friend uses the bathroom," she said. "There is no hot water in her flat and she'd like to take a bath."

"Heavens, no," I said. "I don't mind. Tell her to go ahead."

The young woman slipped behind the green baize curtains in some embarrassment, and presently I heard water splashing in the ancient tub.

"Ludmilla," I asked, "what about your other friends? Did they want to take baths, too?"

It turned out that they did. It also turned out that the Metropole was practically the only place in wartime Moscow except for the public bathhouses where you could take a hot bath. Even in the apartment building occupied by the United States Embassy staff there was hot water only for two hours on Saturday night. From then on we had open house in the U. P. office bathtub. I never knew when, in the midst of dispatching bulletins from *Pravda's* latest editorial, some young woman would emerge from behind the green

curtains, freshly scrubbed, and profusely thank me before hurrying on her way.

Bathing is taken seriously in Russia. When the Red Army started driving the Germans out of Russia and liberating Soviet towns, the municipal bathhouse was the first thing to be restored, once the Nazis had been cleared out and a bakery was running to give the people bread.

But there is another side to the picture, too. Russian toilet facilities, particularly in the country, are primitive. The traditional Russian facility is a hand-hold on the wall and a hole in the floor. Ignorance of this Russian tradition caused a G.I. mess sergeant at one of our air bases in the Ukraine no end of complication and frustration. The mess sergeant had a crew of Ukrainian girls working as waitresses and dishwashers in the mess. With usual G.I. efficiency, a neat box toilet was erected under canvas for the use of the Russian girls. The sergeant, however, had neglected to inquire into Russian habits, and the girls were baffled by the strange device which these curious Americans had constructed. After three days of misunderstanding, the mess sergeant finally called in a Red Army officer and explained his problem, and the girls were given an introductory course in American toilets.

I think Dick Lauterbach of *Life Magazine* once summed up these curious contrasts in Russian life as well as anyone. We were on an airplane flying from Novosibirsk to Alma-Atu. We had left Moscow four or five days before and had been fêted repeatedly, especially at Novosibirsk. When we got on the plane that morning we found that it had been fitted out with luxury that made us gasp. There was a case of champagne on ice, a whole bushel basket of Siberian strawberries—big as plums—and great bouquets of freshly cut wild flowers. After we had been in the air a while, Dick went back to the toilet. He emerged shaking his head.

"That's Russia, for you," he said. "Iced champagne, buckets of strawberries, beautiful bouquets—and the toilet hasn't been cleaned out since we left Moscow!"

It is always a delicate matter to talk about a nation's *mores*, but I think it is fair to say that Russian habits of cleanliness are just as strong as those of any other European country. That was the opinion of our airmen who came over on shuttle raids, both those stationed in Italy and those from England.

The cleanest thing in Russia, surely, is the Moscow subway. The Moscow subway is the pride and joy of every Russian—and rightfully so. It is a small subway compared with those of New York and London, but even during the war they went on extending it. I never saw a cleaner transit system. Thousands of women work night and day, scrubbing and polishing the marble floors and the handsome woodwork of the great escalators. The subway trains themselves are handsome and quiet, and clean as a whistle.

There is much shoddy, hastily thrown up construction in Moscow. But not in the subways. Each station is individually and expensively designed—too elaborately, I should say, but that is a matter of taste. The Russians love the rich red and green marbles, the heavy gilt-and-chrome decor.

This beautiful system is the scene of daily shindigs that make the five o'clock rush hour in New York look like a pink tea party. Partly, this is because the system is too small to handle the crowds. Partly it was due, when I was there, to heavy anti-gas doors, installed during the German threat to Moscow, and not yet removed. Partly it was due, in some stations, to faulty traffic engineering. But, mostly, it was due to pure Russian delight in shoving and pushing. I never saw crowds in finer humor. The bigger the crowd and the tighter the jam, the more fun they had.

The shoving is not confined to the subway by any means.

I have seen a crowd going into a concert sweep away wooden railings and actually trample down several women, in the excitement of getting in to hear their favorite violinist. And I have been packed into the vestibule of a railroad coach so tight that after putting up my arm to grasp an overhead bar I was unable to get it down again until the train reached Moscow. I counted forty-two persons in the vestibule where I was standing, not to mention a good half dozen hanging on the outside. The Russians thought the jam was more fun than anything. They were in high good humor. At one station a little woman, about five feet tall but built like a fullback, managed to elbow herself out of the vestibule. When she got to the door the force of the crowd literally exploded her out of the train.

I am about six feet tall, and in these jams I could always look over the sea of people. The Russians, on the average, are considerably shorter than Americans. When a group of Americans were on a subway we always stood out like a sore thumb because we were head and shoulders over the crowd. Height, I quickly discovered, was a definite disadvantage in a Russian crowd. My center of gravity was too high. The smaller Russians, with their powerful legs and hips, their husky shoulders and sharp elbows, could toss me around like a ship without a rudder.

Yet, often enough, I've had a Russian who had jabbed my ribs black and blue politely ask if I was getting off at the next station before prodding his way around me. Perhaps I should say "her" way, because the Russian women were the champion shovers. After my first session in the Moscow subway no one had to prove to me where the strength of Russia lay. I had seen it in action.

III

The differences between American and Russian *mores* may seem too trivial to mention. But I found that contrasting ways of conduct laid the basis for major misunderstandings between Americans and Russians. To take one example. Shortly after the siege of Leningrad was fully lifted, in February, 1944, the British and American correspondents were taken to see the city. The scheduled program was so full that both the correspondents and the Russian escorting officials were nervous wrecks. On one of these crowded days we reached, in mid-afternoon, the ruins of the famous Peterhof palace. Now it is a fact that one ruined building looks pretty much like another when bombs and shells and fire are through with it. Several of the correspondents were fagged out and, instead of following their escort across nearly half a mile of snow-blanketed formal gardens to inspect a dozen wrecked statues, they threw themselves down in the snow and rested for about twenty minutes. For the Americans, it seemed a natural and sensible thing to do. But they learned later that to the Russians this was an insult to the ruins of a great monument to Russian culture.

Several times the Russians lost their tempers with me because I violated some social custom. There was the incident in Uzbekistan. It was a fantastically hot day, with a shade temperature of about 130. We were being entertained at an official banquet. The hosts were two or three Uzbeks and several Russians. It was much too hot a day to eat, and too hot to drink anything but icewater—of which there was none. I knew the Russian drinking traditions, but this time I had made up my mind that to drink *do adna*, bottoms up, in vodka would be fatal. I was willing to sip wine, but nothing stronger, and nothing more than a sip. As for eating, I was not interested.

The Uzbeks are a quiet and gentle people, and they had no part in what followed. But the Russians, energetic as ever, were on their feet as soon as we got to the table, proposing toasts. I smilingly filled my glass with white wine. That would not do, they said. It must be vodka. I declined. They insisted. I pleaded the hot weather. They said that was no reason—it was a tradition of the country. I said it would be a favor to me if they did not insist. They said that in keeping with the ancient traditions I must drink. Finally, exhausted on both sides, we started to peck at our food. But they renewed the offensive on the food front. Since there were both Russian and Uzbek hosts, we were served two meals, one after the other—one Russian, one Uzbek. I toyed with the Russian meal, but had to leave the Uzbek *shashlik* untouched.

The Russians bore down like tanks on a pillbox. They frankly said this was an insult; that if I did not eat it would mean that I did not appreciate the dinner. I finally ate a few bites. Then I noticed that they were neither eating nor drinking. I suggested that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander. If they were so keen about eating and drinking, how about setting an example? Well, they said, they were not very hungry. It was too hot. And, besides, they didn't drink very much. My temper had worn paper-thin. Why, in all get out, I said, since they knew it was hot, and they didn't want to eat, and they did not want to drink, why did they insist on me drinking and eating?

They looked a bit sheepish. Then one of the Russians blurted out: "It's the custom in Uzbekistan. You must urge the guest to eat and drink. Otherwise you are not a good host."

Like most persons who go to Russia, I suppose, I was not prepared for the persistence of these traditional customs. My impression, like that of most Americans, was that these

folk traditions were scrapped with the Revolution. Russia, I thought, was a "classless state." And it is certainly true that there are no classes in Russia. But this does not mean that there is not a recognition of rank.

This is a subtle but important difference. I know that many Americans come to Russia and, seeing differences in standards of living, leap to the conclusion that these are class differences. I think a better way of putting it is that they are "rank" differences. They are more like the differences that exist in the United States Army than those in civilian life. They stem from the job rather than the person. In the Army there are certain perquisites that go with rank—better quarters, better cars, more conveniences. So it is in Russia.

The theory of rank is very old in Russia. It goes back to Peter the Great, who had a passion for classification and who made up what he called "a table of ranks." This table classified positions in the Army, the nobility, the government, the church, the courts, according to rank. Marshals in the Army ranked with princes of the realm and cabinet ministers. Generals ranked with the next layer of nobility and with subministers.

In this policy Peter was acting in line with an ancient Russian tradition stemming from the Princes of Kiev. The Kiev dynasty controlled half a dozen important cities. But, peculiarly, the realm was not ruled by primogeniture. Instead of the kingdom passing down to the eldest son, each city was ruled by a senior prince. When there was a death in the family the princes—at least in theory—shifted places all around, as in a game of musical chairs.

These shifts were made in accordance with seniority, the most senior prince always reigning in Kiev. It was a large family with dozens of cousins, and it took a complicated genealogical table rank to determine which prince had

seniority. The council of boyars, the Russian substitute for cabinet and parliament, also was run by a quasi-genealogical table which established which line was senior and, by hereditary right, entitled to a particular post in the government.

The Bolshevik revolution killed class society in Russia but, I found, it by no means killed the passion for classification. Among the war changes in Russia has been an intensification of this trend, along with another trend which I found both complex and interesting—the trend to uniforms. My old 1914 Baedeker said that St. Petersburg was the most uniformed of cities; that one out of every three persons in St. Petersburg wore a uniform. St. Petersburg is Leningrad, now, but Baedeker is still accurate.

I was amazed at the number of uniforms I saw all over Russia. The first thing I saw in Russia was a uniform—and the last thing was a uniform. These were the uniforms of the border officers. They wore green tabs. Then there were the railroad workers; they wore black. And the heavy industry commissariat, wearing brown. And the NKVD—red and blue tabs. The air force—blue. Not to forget the foreign office, with its trim gray uniforms. Part of this, of course, was convenience and necessity. Wartime Russia had to scrimp harder than any other nation on consumer goods. Uniforms are a big help toward clothing the population when you are short of cloth.

There is another reason, I think. The Red Army has been glorified above everything else in Russia—and rightly, since it was its heroism and ability which saved the country. But the people behind the lines have fought, too. Theirs has not been the physical danger of the Red Army, but their hardships often exceeded those of the fighting men and women. Uniforms lessen the gap between front and rear. That is important psychologically. It emphasizes the unity of the front-line fighter and the noncombatant.

Along with the uniforms has been introduced a "table of rank." The head of the Foreign Office press department, for instance, holds the rank of "lieutenant-general." The chief escorting officer is a "colonel." The censors are "majors." The heads of departments in the railroad commissariat are also "lieutenant-generals." And the same system of ranks is being extended to other branches of the civil service. "After the war," one Russian said, "we will all be in uniform. Look at the uniforms the Suvarov boys are wearing. They are just like the ones the cadets used to wear. After the war all the students will have uniforms, both boys and girls."

That may be. But it also may be that the astute psychologists who run the Russian state want to make certain that the prestige of the home front shall more nearly equal that of the field front. After all, war strains the social fabric of a country as does no other event. A wise state makes plans in advance for easing these strains and eliminating their causes as it reinforces weak spots. The Russians are great students of social change. It is not likely that their researches have been confined exclusively to the military side of Napoleon's career.

IV

Differences in social background are a perennial source of misunderstanding whether you be in Moscow or Milwaukee. There are very few Russians, indeed, who have ever enjoyed the ordinary conveniences of American life—hot and cold running water, a single-family house, flush plumbing that works, telephones, electric toasters, individual radios, automobiles—all the hallmarks of modern American industrial civilization. Thus, Americans seeing Russian living conditions for the first time during the war may have tended to overemphasize the sacrifices made by civilian

residents. After all, you can not be said to have sacrificed something which you never have had.

Living conditions in Moscow were bad during the war. They were not very good before the war. They had not been very good at any time since the Revolution and—except for a handful of people—they had been bad before the Revolution. You could see this in a thousand ways. I noticed that very few Russians wore glasses. Then I noticed that a great many Russians squinted. Later on, Russian friends expressed their surprise to me at the poor eyesight of foreigners—so many more Americans than Russians wore spectacles. The explanation, of course, was hardly complex. Russia's optical industry had not been developed to the point where the populace could be generally equipped with the spectacles it obviously needed.

There was another simple clue to the real situation. The Russians constantly expressed amazement at the youthful appearance of the Americans whom they met. Generally speaking, they underestimated the age of the average American by about ten years. The reason was obvious enough. The Russians judged the Americans by their own standards. The hardships of their lives left a mark on their faces, and it was quite true that an average American twenty-five years old looked at least five years younger than his Russian counterpart; and the difference in appearance increased progressively with the years. Malnutrition, grueling hours of labor, poor living conditions and, particularly during the war, lack of adequate medical attention have all taken a toll of the Russians.

The difficulties of mere existence in wartime Russia were brought home to me again and again. There was, for example, the incident of the U.P. apartment. About nineteen years ago when Eugene Lyons was representing the United Press in Moscow he had acquired an apartment. It was in

a building erected by a cooperative building society, and for years it was a showplace. It had a living room, a dining room, two bedrooms, an office, a kitchen and a bathroom—enough floor space to accommodate half a dozen families in the overcrowded Moscow of that time, or this. Moscow housing has never been able to keep pace with population growth, because the government has always had higher priority projects—expansion of the steel industry during the five-year-plans or fighting the Germans during the war. So the U.P. apartment with its well equipped kitchen, electric lights and gas range remained an almost unique institution. It was almost as modern as any flat in Kokomo, Indiana.

In October, 1941, when the German tanks probed into the suburbs of Moscow, all foreign correspondents and diplomats were evacuated to Kuibyshev, where the Soviet Foreign Office and some other government agencies established themselves. That winter in Moscow was one of the grimest of modern times. If it was not as grim as Leningrad's winter when 350,000 or 400,000 people froze or starved or died of disease, it was grim enough by any American standard. Half of Moscow had been evacuated to the Urals, and for once there was no housing shortage in the Russian capital. All over the city there were vacant flats and houses, but there was no heat. Those buildings which were still occupied were kept slightly warm by corner chimneys or fireplaces. There was no electricity and little gas in most places, because all available power was going to Moscow's war plants.

What happened to the U.P. apartment was what happened to all Moscow that bitter winter. Since the temperature was far below zero the water in the pipes froze. For two or three months there was no heat. When it finally was turned on, the water poured out through burst pipes. There were a thousand leaks all over the building, and in hun-

dreds of buildings the story was the same. The water trickled through the ceilings and oozed under doors and down the stairway. The ceilings of the dining room and one bedroom crashed down, and every wall in the building was undermined. Then, in order to get at the burst pipes, workmen chopped holes in the walls at what seemed to them to be likely places.

Thus, when I came to Moscow the fabulous apartment was a wreck. Like all the other correspondents, the U.P. men were living at the Hotel Metropole. By this time the pipes had been fixed—but nothing else. After months of cajolery, begging, threats and argument, *Burobin*, the Soviet agency charged with looking after such matters for foreigners, had promised to send workmen to begin the task of rehabilitation; but by now the apartment was a desert of broken plaster. There was still only occasional heat, and even electric heaters were not much use, because there was current in that part of the city only for an hour or so in late afternoon. There was usually gas for a couple of hours—a weak and fitful flow. Many window panes had been broken and repaired with cardboard or wood. I inspected this onetime showplace and decided it was uninhabitable, even by Russian standards

Some weeks later one of my Russian employees came to me in concern. She wanted to know whether her mother and father could stay in the U.P. apartment for two or three weeks. I was shocked. “Why, the place can’t be lived in,” I said. “There’s no heat, hardly any light or gas. Most of the walls have fallen in, and the rest probably will, any day.”

“I know,” she said, “but you can’t imagine what their place is like. I’m afraid for them to stay there any longer. If they could live in the flat for a few weeks until it gets a little warmer we might be able to find them a little *datcha*

in the country." She explained that her family lived in one room of an old three-story Moscow house which once had been their own home. When the Revolution came, the house was taken over by the Moscow Soviet housing authority. Since it was a large house, another family had been quartered there and, over the years, more had moved in until now there were eight families.

In the twenty-five years or so since the Revolution literally no repairs had been made, and the house was almost falling apart. It was heated by a central chimney in the Russian fashion. But the chimney was cracked in a dozen places, and it was impossible to build a fire without filling the house with smoke. So many windows had been broken and boarded up that the house was as dark and gloomy by day as by night. The residents cooked their meals in the common kitchen in the basement, and shared a common toilet on the second floor. They got fuel by going one day a week into the forests near Moscow and chopping wood, and they devoted another half day a week to chopping ice and shoveling snow. Now, the ancient plumbing system had broken down and was flooding down the stairway, with water seeping through the ceiling into the kitchen.

"But who is responsible for this dreadful condition?" I asked.

"The manager of the house," the young woman said.

"Can't you get him to do anything about it?"

"No. He says he can't make any repairs; and when the tenants get angry he just threatens to quit."

"Why don't you let him quit?"

"*Nichevo*," she shrugged. "A new manager would be just the same—maybe worse."

I learned this was a chronic situation which had only been made worse by the war. Moscow's citizens long had been at war with the managers of their apartments, flats

and houses. Almost any day you could pick up the Moscow *Bolshevik* or the *Evening News*, and occasionally *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and read articles and editorials excoriating the inefficiency and neglectfulness of the house managers. The government was alive to the situation, but with the war on, it could do little. Skilled mechanics were on war jobs, and pipes, paint and plaster had gone to war too. The situation at the U.P. apartment and my employee's house was not unique. It was typical. Bad living conditions were just one of the tremendous sacrifices which Russian civilians made to keep the Red Army fighting in the field.

With the end of the war Russia had an amazing backlog of housing to undertake. The conditions in Moscow are bad, but much better than in the devastated cities and towns of European Russia. They are also better than in the overcrowded, overexpanded war cities of the Urals, Siberia and Central Asia.

A list of the ruined cities of Russia reads like a tourist guide. There is Leningrad, where the solid stone façades conceal thousands of interiors gutted by bombs and shells. There are medium-sized cities, like Smolensk or Kalinin, where the Germans carefully fired every large and modern building. The Russians still live in these buildings. After the fires were put out they came back, swept out the rubbish, boarded up the windows and threw a pallet on the floor. They cooked and heated by a stovepipe stuck out the window. There are the obliterated cities, like Stalingrad and Sevastopol—Stalingrad, where two years after liberation the few thousand workers in the city were still living largely in sod huts and earthen caves.

In such cities as these the women were still drawing water from the old wells in the market places, a year or two years after the Germans had been driven out. It was the rule rather than the exception to be without light, except

for an occasional smoky kerosene lamp or a flickering candle. After dark the cities were dead, because the Germans had made a careful habit of blowing up power installations as they fell back.

In the rear areas there are conditions equally grim and primitive. In the Urals cities like Sverdlovsk and Magnitogorsk there has been no time, no manpower, no materials for improved living. The hundreds of thousands of evacuated workers and refugees have been housed catch-as-catch-can, some in timber barracks, some in sod huts, some jammed into already overcrowded apartments and houses. In Omsk, for example, the influx was so great that even the city water supply was not adequate. It was eighteen months before it could be brought up to half the usual requirements of an American city.

In one sense the war has given Russia an unequalled opportunity. Her housing has never been good. It is typical of a country which is still having growing pains, something like Chicago at the time of the great fire. Conditions were primitive before the Revolution and, like a gangling fourteen-year-old, Russia has outgrown new buildings faster than they could be put up.

Russia can and should be rebuilt from one end to the other. If she gets enough German labor and German materiel this could be put high on the priority of her postwar plans. Whether it will be is another question.

V

Nor is housing the only bane of civilian life in Russia. When Eric Johnston talked with Marshal Stalin in the summer of 1944, one subject on which he pulled no punches was that of queues. Queues were a wartime phenomenon in all countries. We had them in America. In London, Americans used to claim that if three people stood together

on the sidewalk they could attract half a dozen pedestrians in five minutes, to wait in line indefinitely before asking what they were waiting for.

In wartime Russia the queues were nightmares. I have seen a blocklong line of people waiting to buy a map. Outside the Metropole Hotel there was a queue from seven in the morning until eleven at night waiting to buy movie tickets. When the government opened up the "commercial" stores, queues waiting to get in were never less than a block long, and sometimes four or five times that.

"Marshal Stalin," Johnston said, "I have seen in Russia one of the greatest wastes of manpower that I have ever encountered."

That brought the Marshal up sharp.

"I refer to the queues," Johnston said. "Tens of thousands of man-hours are being wasted."

Stalin objected that this was due to the war.

"No," Johnston told him. "People tell me that queues have been common in Russia for years. It is evidence of faulty distribution."

The Marshal appropriately objected that before you could do any distributing you had to have something to distribute. Johnston agreed, but said he thought the matter went more deeply, that after the war Russia should invite in some American experts in distribution—chainstore executives and mail order experts—to reorganize the Soviet retail industry. Stalin seemed to think the idea had merit.

A look at Soviet distribution will give an idea of what Johnston had in mind. During the war every Russian had a basic ration card. This was registered with a particular store, generally a store attached to the factory or office where he worked. With this card he could buy minimum quantities of bread, butter, sugar, meat, fish, etc., at extremely low state prices. There was nothing wrong theoretically with

this system. The hitch was that often the store where the card was registered did not have the food which the card entitled the holder to buy. For weeks at a time the store might have no meat, butter or eggs. In fact, this was more likely than not. Or you might have to take chocolates with cornstarch filling instead of sugar. You might get dried fish instead of meat or butter. Sometimes even the bread supply ran short.

The Russian could not go to another store, even though he knew that the store of another factory just a block away had good supplies. By and large his store would reflect the efficiency and importance of the plant where he worked. A well run, high-producing arms plant was more likely to have a good store than a slipshod, small non-military factory. Even if the Russian got all the food his ration card entitled him to, he wasn't very well off. The ration was carefully graded to the job. The white-collar worker got less than the factory worker—and no one, of course, got as much or as good food as the Red Army. But even the Red Army had two diets—one, a very good one, for combat troops, and another one-third smaller for rear area troops. The wounded in rear hospitals got the rear area diet.

Here is the basic ration which a worker could theoretically get in his state store in the spring of 1944: Sugar, about a pound (500 grams) a month, fats, butter, oil, a pound and two thirds (800 grams) a month, cereals, flour or macaroni (often taken in *kasha* or buckwheat), about four and a half pounds (two kilograms) a month, a pound of salt, about five pounds of meat (often taken in fish or caviar) a month; a pound and a half of bread a day, and a box of matches per month. Children and white-collar workers were entitled to a little more than half a pound of sugar a month. Dependents got a little less than half a pound. The rest of the rations were scaled proportionately. Children and de-

pendents got about three-quarters of a pound of bread a day, and about a pound and a third of meat a month.

One thing about this diet should be noted: Bread is the basis of the Russian diet. It is far more important than in America. It substitutes for our meat and vegetables. This is not a war development. It has always been true. Russia eats her cereals as bread rather than as beef as we largely do. The black bread of Russia is as nourishing an item of diet as there is—heavy, slightly moist, slightly sour. It is made from flour milled from the whole grain of wheat and rye and barley—and, during the war, of course, with a good deal of potato. But it is stuffed with vitamins, and when eaten with a vegetable (cabbage) soup and a little meat and butter, provides an excellent diet. This was the basic Red Army ration, and it certainly kept up the energy of the troops. The chief deficiency of the civilian diet was in fats—fats went to the Red Army and the explosive plants. The Russians usually got their fats in the form of butter and cheese. During wartime they had very little butter that came from anywhere but Meadowlake, and very little cheese that did not come from Kraft. A fat Russian became a rarity.

What did the Moscow worker do when he found the cupboard bare at the state store? Well, a friend of mine worked in the Stalin auto plant, one of the best and biggest enterprises in Moscow. The store at his factory was very good, by Moscow standards. But it was a rare week when he did not have to supplement his supplies. He did this by going to the bazaar—the big open market where the peasants sold their produce.

Contrary to what is probably a general impression in America, a considerable amount of small-scale trading, buying and selling for profit is conducted in Russia. It is not only legal, it is part of the incentive system to encourage peasants to boost their food output. Each peasant, whether

he works on a state farm or a *kolkhoz*, or collective farm, has his own plot of land, and what he raises on that is his own, to be eaten or sold at his whim. He also gets a good share of his pay in the form of grain or fruit or milk; and this, too, he can sell if he wants to.

With the inevitable inflation of war, many, many peasants became "ruble millionaires." Some of the city workers spoke of the peasants as the "real profiteers" of the war; but this is not exactly fair. They accumulated their stocks of rubles honestly, and there can be little doubt that without their contribution of food to the free markets many persons in Russia would have suffered and starved.

Nor have the peasants been selfish with their gains. They have made outright gifts of millions of rubles to the Red Army. Almost every day during the war a half page or more of the Moscow press was used to print notes from Stalin acknowledging their gifts, to the Red Army, Air Force and Navy. Many a peasant contributed enough to buy a tank or a Stormavik. One notable peasant family in the Kuban two years running made an outright gift of one million rubles to the war effort. A beekeeper won renown by gifts of hundreds of thousands of rubles each year. The peasants bought billions of the seven percent war bonds which the Soviet treasury issued with a lottery feature which gave prizes of thousands of rubles.

The central market in Moscow looks like a farmers' market in America, except that it is much more crowded.

When I was in Moscow you could buy in the bazaar: Beef at \$17 a pound, pork at \$24 a pound, milk at about \$6 a quart, sugar at slightly more than \$30 a pound, honey at the same price, butter at \$42 a pound, eggs \$2.25 apiece, potatoes about \$1.20 a pound, cabbage about the same, onions \$4 a pound, sour cream \$35 a quart, black bread \$3 a loaf (one pound), white bread \$3.50, cole slaw \$1.15

a saucedish. Or you could buy a nice apple for \$4, a tangerine for \$1, lemons \$5 apiece, coffee beans at \$16 a pound, tea at \$27.50 a pound. A scrawny chicken, weighing about three pounds, was offered at \$38, and two small pieces of candy for \$4.

The prices are those of May, 1944. They were slightly lower than they had been six months earlier, and there has been some reduction and, naturally, considerable fluctuation since then. But Moscow market prices in mid-1945 were still at inflationary levels. Sugar was about \$25 a pound, beef \$15 and butter \$30 *

The picture was the same for consumer goods. In the state commission shops or in private trading at the same period the prevailing prices were fantastic and often one had to shop for days to get any particular item. Such a thing as getting a specific size, style or color was just a dream. Men's rubbers, from \$80 to \$125 a pair, very poor quality; women's fleece-lined galoshes, used and virtually impossible to find, \$200; men's shoes in good condition, \$100 to \$125 a pair, good quality women's shoes, \$300 to \$350; *valenki* (felt boots—a necessity in the Russian winter) \$125; thread, wool or silk, \$3.25 a spool, knitted gloves, \$4 to \$8 a pair, silk, poor quality, \$4 to \$55 a yard; woolen goods, poor quality, \$85 a yard.

Household utilities were most difficult to get. An ordinary vodka bottle (empty) sold for \$2 50 to \$3 25, and I know

* A major effort to reduce inflationary commodity prices was launched by the trade commissariat in late summer, 1945, concurrent with the end of the war in the Pacific and following widespread requisitioning of food by the Red Army in occupied Europe. Butter, which had been reduced to \$20 a pound, was cut to \$14, meat dropped from \$9 to \$7 a pound, sugar from \$19 to \$12 25, bread from \$1 75 a pound loaf to \$1 20. The overall average reduction of food prices at commercial stores (which brought similar reductions in the open market) was 15 percent. Other commodities also fell in price: pots and pans 33 percent, musical instruments 50 percent, cosmetics 37 percent, clothing 15 to 20 percent.

one free-lance correspondent who picked up half a dozen from German dugouts on the Leningrad battlefield to sell in Moscow. Many persons bought bottles and sawed them off to use as glasses. A cup and saucer sold for \$4, and a good sized aluminum stewpot for \$28. A baby's bathtub cost \$40. The prices of toys were in proportion, and the quality was shoddy. A wooden toy auto sold for \$2.50 to \$4.00, a rag doll \$12, and a fur teddy bear \$20.

Old newspapers, to be used as cigarette paper, brought 25 cents a copy. An ordinary novel, in good condition, up to \$40. Good quality cigarettes \$4 to \$5 a pack, and loose tobacco, poor grade, \$6 to \$8 per hundred grams. Vodka sold at \$20 a pint, with the price jumping as high as \$100 just before Christmas, Easter or May Day. Stove wood cost \$65 for a fourth of a cord, plus \$25 to \$35 for delivery.

To put those prices into perspective, it is necessary to note that the average Moscow factory worker was earning from \$85 to \$150 a month. Crack *stakhonovites* were making up to \$200. I have calculated the prices in rubles at the diplomatic exchange of twelve to the dollar.

The food and produce sold in the state markets was handled legally. Around the fringes of the crowd, however, technically non-legal trade went on which was often winked at by the militia (the Russian equivalent of our police). Here ration cards were bought and sold. Bread bought on a ration card was sold and the proceeds used, perhaps, to buy vodka. This was a minor sort of black market, but an easily understandable one. No one in Russia had much. The machinery of trading was limited. City dwellers had to sell goods to get food. They would sell an old pair of *valinki* for enough to buy a kilo of sugar. It was against the law to sell anything you got on your ration, but a good deal of this trade went on.

There was still another way in which my friend at the

Stalin plant could supplement his diet. He, like all the other employees, worked at the factory's own farm where food was grown for the plant commissary where he got one or two meals per day. He also had his own little victory garden plot. If he could spare the time, and many Muskovites apparently could, he could go out into the country on his free day and buy food in the little country markets where the prices were considerably lower than in the central Moscow markets.

Two other major sources of food came into being within the last eighteen months. These were "commercial" stores and "commercial" restaurants. These "commercial" institutions sold food at open market prices rather than ration prices. They were well run, as are most institutions under the direction of the able Foreign Trade Commissar Mikoyan.

Shortly after the "commercial" stores opened, I visited Magazin No. 1, which had a fine location on Gorki street. It was housed in a shop which before the Revolution was operated by possibly the leading Moscow dealer in fine food and liquor, and I doubt that even in its prerevolutionary heyday the merchant had better stocks to offer than I saw.

Here were white Siberian partridge, succulent and tender, great sturgeon, mountains of caviar—the pressed black, the delicate fresh gray and the juicy red—fine sirloin and porterhouse steaks, great roasts of beef and of lamb, handsome fish from all the rivers of Russia, venison, wild ducks, turkey, fat geese, suckling pigs—anything in meat, fish or game that one could imagine. There were creamy mounds of sweet butter, cheeses big as cartwheels, acres of shelves filled with all kinds of canned fruit and vegetables, chocolates and candies and cakes to feed a regiment, and row after row of wines, brandies and vodka.

Any person in Russia could buy at this store. Some quan-

tities were limited, but you could come back the next day and buy again. Not a point would come off your ration book. But the prices! They were approximately those of the open market, although a few items were higher or lower. Milk, for instance, was offered at one-third less than the market price—and the market price promptly dropped. Sugar sold at 100 rubles less than the market, with the same result. Red Army men and some categories of workers got special discounts up to 25 percent from the list prices, but even so they made your head swim. Yet, just to see such goods was an attraction which brought thousands of Muskovites into the stores, to wander around and feast their eyes on everything they had gone without since the start of the war. And in many a Moscow home a stock of two or three thousand rubles which had been gathering dust in a sugar bowl was counted out and spent for these luxuries.

There were, I think, several reasons why these “commercial” stores were started. One, obviously, was to obtain control of the open-market price structure. By raising and lowering prices in the “commercial” stores the state could elevate or depress the open market. People would buy where goods were cheaper. Another factor, doubtless, was to sop up some of the excess purchasing power. In spite of the heavy war loan subscriptions, gifts to the Red Army, etc., the huge earnings of the peasants and factory workers, with long hours of overtime, piled up because they had no outlet for their money. There were no consumer goods to be had. So this money had been going into the open market and bidding prices up in an inflationary spiral. It had also been going into the state commission shops, where a Russian can sell anything from a fishing pole to a grand piano, with the state taking a 10 percent fee for handling the sale. Inflation in the commission shops had brought the prices of ancient czarist bric-a-brac to startling levels—an old silver

serving spoon, for example, might be offered at nearly \$500, a bad painting by some 1890 Russian imitator of the French school would be offered at 36,000 rubles (\$2,988).

A third reason for the stores, I think, was to give the people a break. They had had three years of grimmer war than anyone had ever fought. The Government could not basically improve their living conditions while the war was on, but it could give them this little vista of things that had been and things that were to come. And this was done, not only for the factory workers and those on the home front, but for the Red Army men and women, who often enough found when they came back on their infrequent leaves that Moscow was in some ways grimmer than the front.

The "commercial" restaurants were cut out of the same pattern. There were about eight of these in Moscow, and at least one in every city of any size throughout Russia. Those in Moscow each had an orchestra and one, that in the swank Moskva Hotel, had two—a string orchestra to play early in the evening and an American-style jazz band to play later on. They all served excellent dinners. For 600 rubles, about \$50, you could get as good a meal as would have cost you \$3.50 in New York.

The restaurants were particularly popular with Red Army youngsters in Moscow for a few days from the front with their pockets stuffed with money—just like any soldiers anywhere. The atmosphere of these places was a bit like that of the West End restaurants in London, where the British winked at black market violations in order to provide recreation for the fighting men. Most of the guests stayed in the Moscow restaurants until 5 A.M., when the curfew lifted and they could go home without being picked up by the militia.

Shortly after the commercial restaurants were opened I went to one on a pleasant spring evening. This was a

"gypsy" restaurant which before the war had been one of the best in Moscow. Now it was open again, for the first time since 1941, and a handful of the former gypsy entertainers were back on hand—five in all. One was an elderly bull fiddle player, another was a middle-aged singer, and three were girls in their late teens. They sang and danced—with no great skill—at half-hour intervals during the evening. The restaurant obviously had been reopened in some haste. It had been cleaned up and sketchily daubed with fresh paint, and half a dozen venerable waiters were on duty. The linen was fine and clean, and the cutlery, china and glass in the rich, heavy Russian tradition.

I glanced around the room. The place was hardly one-third filled. Almost all the diners were young. About half were Red Army men and women, resting from the front. There were possibly sixty people in the café. About fifteen or eighteen were workers from Moscow factories. The rest were small family groups, a husband, wife, elderly mother or young daughter, and so on. Perhaps they were civil servants.

Two young men were having a gay time, wandering from table to table and sharing drinks with other guests. They came and sat with me a while. Both were railroad workers, just back from the Caucasus, where they had been working at restoring the lines which the Germans destroyed. They had obviously saved plenty of rubles—enough to buy a good many bottles of wine during the evening.

I noticed, however, that not many people were ordering full course dinners. The meals were à la carte and the most frequent order was soup, a salad and a dessert or a meat course and dessert with a glass of beer or wine. At some tables the guests had ordered *zakuski* (hors d'oeuvres) and a bottle of vodka.

A look at the menu threw some light on this. Here are

some of the items I jotted down: Fresh caviar, \$5.75; vegetable salad, \$9; crab salad, \$8; butter, \$2 for an ample portion; ham and potatoes (the cheapest entrée on the list), \$5.75; goose or turkey, \$9; beef steak, \$8.50; steak and onions, \$9; roast beef and potatoes, \$10.50; Wiener schnitzel, \$10.50; *shashlik*, \$10; pork cutlet, \$12; chicken cutlet, \$11.75; roast duck and apples, \$15; grouse, \$10.50; ham and eggs, \$7; various kinds of fish, \$9 to \$11; cheese, \$2; white bread, four slices, \$2.30; black bread, 70 cents.

Desserts ran like this: Ice cream (very good, too) \$3.50; orange salad, \$3.75; apple in red wine, \$2 50; best grade cake (a good solid hunk) \$8.25; chocolate cake, \$9.75; box of candy for your girl, \$35. Tea with lemon and sugar was \$1.25. Coffee and milk were \$1.90 a portion. I thought to myself that the proprietors of the Stork Club and 21 would feel like pikers if they could come to Moscow and see what could be done in the way of prettying up a menu.

Almost any kind of liquor except Scotch, bourbon or gin was to be had. But naturally at a price. Apricot liqueur sold for \$30; benedictine, \$32; brandy, \$40; port wine, \$22; dry white wine, \$20; red table wine, \$14; muscat, \$36; champagne, \$27; vodka, \$25; beer, \$3.25. The prices for the liqueurs and hard liquors are for half a liter, a little more than a pint. Those for the wines are for a three-quarter-liter bottle and for the beer, half a liter. I found that these prices were virtually standard at the various restaurants, although there was some variation in the menus.

Before the opening of these places there had been but one dining-out place in Moscow, the Arogyv restaurant which specialized in Georgian dishes. Its meals were notable and its prices equally so, running on a scale even above those of the "commercial" restaurants. The Arogyv did a brisk trade among the diplomatic set. Foreigners could go to the Arogyv but were always served in private dining

rooms, carefully segregated from the Russians. Before the "commercial" restaurants there was only one other place of public gathering in Moscow. This was an institution called, simply, "Bar." Located on Gorki street, it was exactly what the name indicated—a cocktail bar. It was really for the enjoyment of foreigners, although Russians were permitted to attend if they were willing to brave the long queue. Under the curious Russian social tradition that the foreigner is always privileged, we were instantly admitted, while the Russian might wait an hour or more for the chance of spending \$10 for a champagne cocktail.

All you need is a pencil and paper to figure out how much a full dinner at one of the commercial restaurants would cost. On several occasions some of the correspondents joined to take a distinguished foreign visitor to dinner. I remember one time when six of us took two guests to dinner, with a total bill of more than 6,000 rubles—something over \$500. Dining out was obviously not an everyday practice in Moscow. In contrast, dinner at the Metro-pole Hotel at "rationed" prices cost anywhere from \$1.75 to \$2.50; but the food, although better than what the Russians received on their ration, was unappetizing, and within an hour after eating you usually were hungry again. Not many Russians were able to take advantage of these new restaurants, but the fact that they existed and that at least one could go and have a full, fine dinner if the money ever came to hand was a great morale booster in the tired, worn-out days of the third year of Russia's unparalleled war effort.

The Best Propaganda in the World

I

One quiet Sunday in July, 1944, James Fleming, then correspondent in Moscow of the Columbia Broadcasting System, finished writing a story, and gave his copy to a courier to be taken over to the press department for censorship. It was a dull day, and there was little news. Fleming had put together a couple of items from the morning papers, and had let it go at that. About half an hour later his courier called from the press department, greatly puzzled.

"Mr. Fleming," she said, "the censors say they cannot accept any copy from you."

Fleming, who had been in Moscow about six months, phoned the press department and asked for Mr. Appalon Petrov, at that time the head of the department.

"Mr. Petrov is not here," the secretary said, "and I have been instructed to tell you that he will not speak with you."

Fleming was baffled. Finally he got John Melby, press attaché at the United States Embassy, to make an appointment with Petrov for the next day, to find out what was the trouble.

About nine o'clock Sunday evening the secretary of the press department telephoned Fleming. She said she had been instructed to tell him to turn in his press card. She hung up as soon as she had delivered the message. Shortly after midnight that night Fleming and I went over to the press department and he turned in his card, first removing his photograph which was affixed to it, explaining to the secretary that the photograph was his property. The secre-

tary laughed and accepted the mutilated card. She offered no explanation of what was going on.

When we came to leave the building we were stopped by the guard because Fleming had no pass. Fleming explained that he had been compelled to turn it in upstairs. The guard telephoned the press department, found the explanation was correct, and allowed us to leave. Once on the street, Fleming could have been arrested by the militia at any moment, because he had no pass. Luckily, we were not stopped.

In Russia, it should be explained, a press card is more than just a press card. It is the permit for a correspondent to live. Without it he can receive no rations, he can get no meal tickets at his hotel, he can not get or keep a room at the hotel, he can not enter the press department building. He can not keep or renew his Russian residence permit. Nor is the residence permit valid without the press card. Only theoretically can a correspondent exist in Russia without this valuable bit of red cardboard.

Thus, Fleming had been reduced within a few hours and without a word of explanation from a correspondent with quasi-diplomatic status to the standing of a quasi-illegal foreign resident in Moscow. Furthermore, he was powerless to make a single move. He could not talk to the press department by phone—they refused to take his calls. He could not appear in person—he had no pass.

"Well," he said to me as we walked back to the Metropole in the warm moonlight, "at least I have meal tickets until the end of the month—if they don't throw me out of the hotel. And if they take up my meal tickets I have a good supply of spam and canned milk."

"That's okay, Jim," I said. "We'll take up a food collection and see that you don't starve."

We were only half joking.

Before Jim turned in his press card, we had tried to figure out the strange behavior of the press department. Jim had only one suggestion. He explained that for the past three weeks he had been having difficulties with one of the censors, a self-important young man named Okhov who had picked up a superficial knowledge of American slang in New York, but whose general understanding of English was faulty.

"Okhov," Jim explained, "has been making a lot of unnecessary cuts in my broadcasts. At first I argued about it, but I accepted the cuts rather than go to the trouble of appealing to Petrov. Finally, when he wrecked one of my broadcasts, I took the copy in to Petrov and got the original language restored."

But there was further trouble. Okhov took the liberty of rephrasing several passages of one of Fleming's scripts. When Fleming asked him why he did that, Okhov said he thought his version sounded better than Fleming's. Fleming protested that this was editing, not censorship, and Okhov retorted that he was not required to discuss such matters with correspondents. Several days later, Fleming submitted another routine dispatch from the morning papers. Okhov made two cuts in it. At one place he cut the phrase "Hitler Kaput." At another, he cut four or five words of indirect quotes from an *Izvestia* correspondent's front report. Fleming confronted Okhov and asked him what the idea was.

"I don't have to discuss censorship with correspondents," Okhov snapped.

"But, man alive," Fleming sputtered, "these phrases are right out of the morning paper. I've quoted them verbatim."

Okhov shrugged his shoulders and said: "What are you going to do about it?"

That was too much for Jim. He is a sanguine, steady individual. I know him well, and I doubt that he had ever before displayed any temper since coming to Russia—more than you could say of most of the rest of us. But inside Jim there is a fine, fiery streak of Irish temper, and Okhov had finally touched it off. "This is what I'm going to do about it!" Fleming thundered. He took his cables, ripped them apart with a mighty tear, tossed them into the air and strode from the room as the paper sifted down like snow over Okhov's desk.

That evening Fleming sent over his broadcast as usual to the press department. It was censored without incident. The next day it was the same—no trouble. On the day following Petrov called him in and told him he understood there had been some unpleasantness with Okhov—that he had insulted Okhov by tearing up a cable and throwing it in the censor's face. Fleming explained what had happened, and said he thought Okhov had insulted him. Petrov expressed vague regret, and asked why the cables had not been brought in to him for reconsideration. Fleming said it was a trivial matter, but that Okhov's jibes had finally gotten under his skin. He said he was sorry he had lost his temper, but the provocation was great. Petrov explained that they had difficulty in getting personnel and that there had been difficulties before about Okhov, who was inexperienced. He said he would speak to the young man, and he trusted there would be no more difficulty. Fleming left with the impression that Okhov would be called on the carpet and ordered to quit sniping.

To me there seemed nothing in all this to account for the curious action of the press department. In view of Petrov's apologies for Okhov he could hardly now be penalizing Fleming for what was at most a temper tantrum. Rows between censors and correspondents were not peculiar to Mos-

cow, and in Moscow they were everyday occurrences. During one of the worst wrangles a correspondent once had torn the maps off the press room wall in frustrated rage without drawing any penalty but a mild reprimand.

One press corps veteran, however, said he had reason to know that Okhov had demanded that Petrov obtain a personal apology from Fleming for what the censor described as an affront to his honor. "I am sure Okhov is at the bottom of this," he said. "The only thing which puzzles me is why Petrov took such a mild line when he talked to Fleming."

Sure enough, the next day Melby was told by Petrov that Fleming had "insulted an official of the *Atdel Pyachati*, in uniform, while carrying out his duties in the office of the Narkomindel of the U.S.S.R." This conduct, said Petrov, was intolerable. The press department had "broken off relations with Mr. Fleming." It made no difference whether Mr. Fleming wished to apologize for the affair or not (Mr. Fleming did not). The damage was done. Mr. Fleming, so far as Mr. Petrov was concerned, could do as he pleased. The press department had no further interest in him. However, he emphasized, Mr. Fleming was not being expelled from the Soviet Union. He was at liberty to remain if he so desired. But he could not broadcast. Petrov declined to admit that he had acted without giving Fleming a hearing, insisting that Mr. Fleming knew very well why this action was taken.

This report aroused the Association of British and American Correspondents, who saw in it a precedent for arbitrary action against all of them. They sent a delegation to call on Petrov. The interview was one of the most stormy of the many in Petrov's career. He attacked them for supporting Fleming, declaring that they had become virtual parties to Fleming's conduct. He said that, as far as he was concerned,

whether Fleming was allowed to stay in Moscow or forced to leave was merely "a question for the militia." One correspondent sarcastically asked the press chief whether he would recommend that Fleming try to support himself by selling his possessions in the market place. Petrov rejoined that the department had in the past been most lenient. There were other correspondents whose conduct had justified disciplinary action. Petrov concluded that the department would not hesitate to treat others just as it had treated Fleming, if it felt their actions justified such steps. Naturally, Fleming was forced to leave Moscow. He had no alternative.

This incident is not so important in itself as it is in the general framework of press relations in Moscow. Outside of Russia it is frequently supposed that the Russians are master propagandists. Russia is credited with being a genius at getting her story before the world public. A picture is drawn of a spidery web of Red propaganda, centering in Moscow and enveloping the earth. Somehow, the foreign correspondents in Moscow are supposed to be part of this web.

Since getting back to the United States I have had people say to me: "I read your dispatches from Moscow but, of course, you couldn't tell what you really thought. What is actually going on in Russia? And how do the Russians manage to get you correspondents to write their propaganda?"

To anyone coming from Moscow those questions sound silly. Moscow's foreign propaganda and press policy is one of the weakest spots in a governmental set-up which has few important weaknesses. Furthermore, there is nothing new about this. For many, many years, Moscow dealings with the foreign press have been incompetent, ignorant, and, more often than not, shiftless and inefficient.

Coming into Moscow in the third year of a hard war, I was inclined to excuse many things on grounds of wartime

necessity and urgency. But you have only to dip into a description of press relations in Moscow written by Walter Duranty in the late 'Twenties to see that nothing has changed, except for the worse, between 1928 and 1945.* The trouble is chronic—although each newcomer to Moscow, if he is energetic, may embark on a campaign to "educate" the Russian press officials. Sooner or later—usually sooner—he gives up in disgust, resignation, anger or frustration.

If all that was at stake in this was the feelings of a handful of newspapermen, or if it was merely a question of "getting stories out of Russia," this might be an interesting subject but not necessarily an important one. Its significance lies in the fact that chronic bad press relations in Moscow are an ulcer, constantly draining poison into relations between Russia and the rest of the nations of the world. (A Russian will tell you that the anti-Russian stories and propaganda in the west have a similar effect on the relationship—and the Russian is right about that, too.)

It is typical for a correspondent to go to Moscow from America or England, full of excitement and confidence about the job of reporting and interpreting Russia to the rest of the world. It is even more typical for him to leave Russia after six months or a year, sullen and grim, licking his wounds and vowing that he will never go there any more.

II

The Fleming incident illustrates vividly the real situation regarding the foreign press in Moscow as contrasted with the fanciful pictures which somehow are conjured up

* In November, 1945, the Russian censorship suddenly was relaxed. Except for a few dispatches by Randolph Churchill who happened to be in Moscow at the time, correspondents' reports came through almost uncut. This lasted from Nov. 7 to Dec. 10 when rigorous censorship was resumed—after one month and three days.

abroad. It was not an isolated incident. It grew out of a general situation which had been building up for a long time.

After August, 1939, when the Russo-German pact was signed, the American and British press virtually withdrew from Moscow. For many months there were only two American correspondents in Moscow, the representatives of the United Press and the Associated Press. Great papers like the *New York Times*, the *London Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* had no representation in Russia at all.

For a couple of years after the Germans attacked Russia there was little change, but gradually an influx of correspondents descended on Moscow, reaching a peak, in the summer of 1944, of some thirty-five Americans, Britons and Canadians, with one Frenchman, four Japanese, one refugee Czech, one refugee German, one refugee Spaniard, three Chinese and possibly two or three other miscellaneous individuals who were technically accredited to the press department.

To handle these people the press department had the following staff. A chief, Appalon Petrov, whose understanding of English was good, although he seldom spoke it unless angry; one assistant, whose English was imperfect but who made a sincere and painful effort to understand; another assistant who did not know English at all; three former Columbia University language students, two men and one young woman—the young woman had a good knowledge of English but seldom was permitted to censor copy, and neither of the men had acquired anything like an idiomatic knowledge of English; one young woman who had won a Stalin prize for her English studies—she read and spoke the language better than most of the correspondents; and three secretaries, all of them women. One spoke excellent French and had some reading knowledge of English; one spoke no

English but could read a little, and the third both spoke and read the language, but not fluently. There were also two young men who, I suppose, rated as clerks. Neither of them spoke any English, and one of them was regarded by his Russian colleagues as mentally deficient.

The staff totaled twelve. Numerically, it was not more than half as large as it should have been. It was slightly smaller than it had been at the outbreak of the war. Qualitatively, it was even more deficient. The chief, Petrov, was a serious, hard-working individual utterly unqualified for his job, hating it every day, but apparently doing the best he knew how. Petrov was a small, nervous man who had been a professor of Chinese literature before going into the diplomatic service. He had served some time in the Soviet Embassy in Chungking, and apparently had been brought in to head the press department for no better reason than that he happened to be available. He was half sick—suffered from stomach ulcers; and the band of aggressive and demanding correspondents left him pale and sometimes trembling.

It was seldom that he was able to do anything for a correspondent, but it was my impression that he often tried. In the spring of 1945, Petrov relinquished the press department with relief and went to Chungking as Soviet Ambassador. He had done nothing to improve Russia's press relations during his year's tenure but, on a basis of suffering alone, he had more than earned his promotion. He was succeeded by one Zinchenko, who had been Maisky's press attaché in London. Zinchenko, intelligent and able, was fully equipped, technically, to run an excellent press department but his tenure lasted only a few months.

Petrov's chief assistant at the time of which I write was Dongulov, a Georgian. He had been a war correspondent for *Red Star*, and was brought into the department to

as conducting officer in taking the correspondents on trips to the "front." He was warm-hearted and friendly, and his English was difficult. He worked hard at it, and often you were tempted to shake him to make the words that stuck in his throat come out. He knew the Army and its ways and, when he was allowed to, did an excellent job of escorting the correspondents. His great handicap was lack of English and a Caucasian sensitivity which sometimes took affront at the rough-and-ready jokes of the American correspondents—usually because he did not quite understand what they were saying. He was also given to fits of depression.

The other chief assistant was a total loss. He knew no English, and his only strong interest seemed to be in vodka. He probably was a castoff from some other department, and within a few months he was fired.

The three Columbia University language students provided a contrast. One of them was Okhov. He had spent a year or two in New York at the Soviet consulate and had picked up a veneer of American patois—baseball terms, Broadway slang, and the names of Hollywood movie actresses. It was not until he had been around the press department for several weeks that I discovered that this was only a veneer, that actually he did not understand much that was said to him or written in our cables. Another was Zimenkov. He was a stocky, square-faced young man who had picked up one American custom—he was perpetually grinning and showing his toothy mouth. Zimenkov was a sincere worker, but slow as molasses, and stubborn. It was he who once refused to let a correspondent call Ilya Ehrenbourg a "Francophile" because "it was well known that Ehrenbourg had supported the loyalists in Spain." The third was a young woman who had acquired a better knowledge of English than either of the men possessed. But she had also acquired an American wardrobe and a good many American

ways. Her Russian colleagues thought she was too Americanized, and seldom allowed her to censor cables or act as an escorting officer on a trip.

The most intelligent and effective member of the department was the Stalin winner, Nina Brint. She was a sturdy, serious-minded young woman who worked hard, with long hours. She was sincere, conscientious and patient, even when correspondents were most difficult, and had a store of dry, hard humor which got over the rough spots. She was the only member of the department with a real know-how of censorship, press relations, and what the correspondents had to have in the way of facilities.

The other members of the department played no active role. They were preoccupied by red tape.

With the exception of the three Columbia students, no member of the department had first-hand acquaintance with the Western world. With the exception of Dongulov none of them had practical knowledge of newspaper work, either in Russia or abroad. There were, making every allowance, only four whose reading knowledge of English was fair, or better. It was small wonder that this crew was usually at odds with the correspondents.

Language was only a minor barrier, because there were a good many speakers of Russian among the correspondents—at least five with excellent Russian, and another six to eight whose Russian was about like the press department's English. And all the correspondents who did not know Russian had Russian-speaking assistants.

Then there were red tape and jealousy within the Foreign Office. There are two information bodies in the Narko-min-del. One is the press department and the other is the Sovinformburo, headed until his death in May, 1945, by A. S. Shcherbakov, a member of the Politburo, and technically supervised by old Solomon Lozovsky—the Harold

Ickes of the Foreign Office. The Sovinformburo, or Soviet Information Bureau, was much larger than the press department, better staffed and better equipped. It issued the communiqués, had access to information of every kind about the Soviet, and cabled much material to foreign publications. It worked closely with the official news agency, Tass. But it had nothing to do with foreign correspondents. It would not accept any inquiry for information from a correspondent, always referring them to the press department. The press department, if given the query, only rarely was able to get the information out of Sovinformburo.

A typical and outstanding example of the total lack of liaison between these two bodies related to the war communiqué. This was issued by Sovinformburo. Sovinformburo received the text some time in advance of release, to enable the bureau to translate it into foreign languages for transmission over the Moscow short-wave. But the correspondents in Moscow could not get a copy of the communiqué in English. They could not get a copy in advance in Russian. In fact, they could not even get a copy when the communiqué was released. Nor, for that matter, could the press department. The press department had to take it down on a typewriter when it was read off on the radio. Often they were too busy to copy it down, or forgot to listen, or had no typist.

I doubt that this and the many similar shortcomings were particularly the fault of the press department. It seemed apparent that they went deeper. In one of the countless discussions I had with Soviet officials on the general subject of press policy, I argued this question at length. "The world," I said, "is eager for news of Russia. This is particularly true in America. I naturally have a selfish interest in this. I am a correspondent here, and I want to get as many stories as I can. But, looking at it from Russia's own self-interest, it

seems to me to be short-sighted. I believe that you are neglecting a very important weapon—propaganda ”

The official smiled.

“Yes,” he said. “I know that argument. But I have a better one. We have the best propaganda in the world—and the press department has nothing to do with it. Our propaganda is the Red Army.”

What he meant was that if the victories of the Red Army did not give Russia a good press, then any small mechanical improvements, such as providing copies of the communiqué, faster and more intelligent censorship would have no effect

There was some truth in what he said. But, practically speaking, it was nonsense. The story of the Russian war was not written from Moscow. It was written from London, where correspondents could hear the Moscow communiqué by radio at the very moment we were trying to scribble it down by pencil from the loud-speakers of the Moscow internal radio. Because of unpredictable censorship delays and erratic communications, it was impossible to deliver to America a dispatch on the day's fighting in Russia less than two to four hours after the story had been written in London. The London correspondents, naturally, were allowed to speculate about the Russian front to their hearts' delight. They could compare and contrast the Soviet claims with those of the Germans. The Moscow correspondents were barred from almost all speculation, only rarely permitted to suggest that a Nazi communiqué existed, and never allowed to note any discrepancy between the Soviet and Nazi versions.

Obviously, had the Russians had any real interest in slanting or controlling the war story, they would have taken steps to see that it was written from Moscow where, through censorship, they had a complete control on what the correspondents sent. It would have been a simple,

mechanical matter to provide the communiqué to the correspondents in Moscow early enough to insure their version being published. Nothing like this was ever done—despite constant suggestions by the correspondents.

III

I have sometimes heard men who have served for a long time in Moscow suggest that the Russians are not really interested in the foreign correspondents there. They suggest the Government would be just as pleased if they all left and if Soviet news coverage were to be concentrated in the hands of Moscow radio, Sovinformburo and the Tass news agency.

I think that, occasionally, harried Soviet officials may think that. I think they reach that conclusion because they find the correspondents difficult—demanding things which are hard to produce, constantly trying to step across the tight compartments that divide the authority of the various Soviet departments, and wanting to write stories which, in the Soviet view, are not important. This attitude goes deep into many of the difficulties between the Soviet and the Western world. By and large Soviet officials have had little opportunity for contact with foreigners.

We often think of Russia as a strange and mysterious land, hard to get into, hard to learn anything about. We seldom stop to think that this works both ways—that the Western world is equally strange and mysterious to the ordinary Russian—or more so.

The cartoon idea of the Kremlin as a dark and dismal dungeon where bearded dynamite throwers plot the world revolution can be matched by the Russian's notion of the West as an alien world filled with organizers of plots and conspiracies to conquer and lay waste his homeland. Twenty-five years of such cartoons in the West and twenty-five years of such cartoons in Russia leave an impact upon Western

and Russian minds which persist even despite conscious efforts to ignore or suppress these impressions.

I remember that a week or so after I arrived in Moscow I returned to my hotel room one day after a few hours and found that a letter which I had been writing was missing. There was nothing important in the letter—just a few first impressions on seeing Russia. I looked for it on my desk. It was not there. Immediately I jumped to the conclusion that my room had been searched and the letter abstracted by the NKVD. I was indignant—and also alarmed. An hour or so later, I discovered my letter in a pile of papers—and remembered that I had gathered it up with the papers and put it to one side, just where I found it. The incident was of no importance except for my reaction. In any other capital I would have hunted through my papers before leaping to a conclusion that the police had been searching my room.

This works the other way, too. Take Russian secrecy, for example. Few foreigners fail to be impressed by it. Particularly during the war the concept of “security” was applied to what seems a fantastic degree. For instance, there was the Russian eight-barrel rocket mortar, called the *katuysha*. The Russians had this weapon at the start of the war. It was widely used and, naturally, was soon captured by the Germans. Yet for two and a half years it was carted around Russia under canvas covers, and correspondents were not permitted to describe the *katuysha*.

This impressed us as childish. Yet it was just as natural for the Russians as was my reaction when I could not find my letter on my desk.

The Russians learned secrecy the hard way. Anyone who has delved into the history of the fifty years or so before the Revolution quickly learns the role secrecy played in political activity under the Czars. The Revolution was nur-

tured in an atmosphere of danger which can only be compared with that of Germany under Hitler. Probably, the Gestapo was more efficient than the Czar's police. But it was only a matter of degree. To survive, to live in Russia, meant keeping your mouth shut. The Revolution was born in that tradition. It lived for years on the ragged edge between success and failure, and learned new lessons of reticence. The Russians are not a silent people, but when your life depends on whether you talk or not, it is not hard to learn to be quiet. The discovery, prior to the evacuation of Anders' Polish army from Russia, that the Poles had set up an espionage network covering most of the Soviet Union, was hardly calculated to lull their suspicions of foreigners.

Against this background Soviet press policy becomes more understandable.

A favorite subject of discussion in America is why the Russians did not allow United States correspondents at their front. The usual American conclusion is that this was done because the Russians had something they wanted to conceal. Actually, the explanation was by no means so romantic.

The first, and probably the most important reason, was the old Russian tradition that a foreigner occupies a special position. This tradition stems from Peter the Great, or before his time, but is still alive today. Peter had trouble getting foreign technicians to come to Russia to teach his people how to build ships and repair clocks. So he gave them special pay, special houses, special privileges. Actually, this was a mere function of the difference between living conditions in Russia and those of western Europe. The difference is still there—and so is the attitude toward foreigners.

Foreigners are given better rations, and better housing than are Russians. When foreign correspondents were taken to the "front," special food often was flown up so that ap-

propriate banquets could be held. When we were taken to Katyn forest to see the atrocities, a special plush-lined train was run because Kathy Harriman, the Ambassador's daughter, was going along. An inferiority complex is involved here. The Russians have been told that they are backward people. In spite of mighty gains, they still lag behind the West in many comforts of living. But they are also a proud people, and they are not willingly going to display to Westerners any inferiority, particularly, none that might inspire remarks about Russian barbarians.

Most of the discomforts I suffered in Russia stemmed from Russian efforts to give me special treatment. For instance, several of us were taken at one time to inspect a camp of Polish Army recruits. A lumbering old bus was turned out to transport us. When we came to leave the camp a bad blizzard had blown up. We had seven or eight miles of rutty, unpaved road to travel to get to the highway, and it was obvious that the wheezing bus would not be able to make it through the drifts. There were at the camp a number of new American Studebaker trucks, big enough to take the party, but, of course, we would have to ride on wooden side benches under a canvas cover. It would be cold and bumpy. We pleaded with the Russians to abandon the bus and take us back in a truck. They were insulted. We would freeze in the truck. We would get pneumonia. So we were loaded into the bus. Naturally it broke down. We spent most of the night trying to sleep on the cold floor of a tiny post office along the highway while the Russians telephoned the camp for one of the Studebakers. We eventually arrived in Moscow about 8 A.M., riding in the defunct bus, under tow by the Studebaker in which we had begged to be allowed to ride.

Peasant and high official alike insist on treating the foreigner like a person apart. Maybe it stems from the Oriental

influence which was so long predominant in Russia, but from whatever source, it is very real and very strong

I have seldom felt as embarrassed as on a trip to Leningrad shortly after the siege was finally lifted. Probably one-third of the populace of Leningrad had starved to death during the war. Leningrad, by now, was getting extra rations—thanks to incredible sacrifices by the remainder of Russia. Yet, we were given clean, warm rooms in the Astoria hotel and banquet after banquet until I was sick of food. Between the banquets we interviewed Leningraders who told how their friends had died of starvation.

Once on a special train we were sitting in the dining car, the tables piled high with rich butter, cheese, caviar, thick borsch, plates of meat and stacks of bread. Nestled between these delicacies were bottles of wine and vodka and champagne. The train came to a stop beside a string of freight cars which had been fitted with rude, straw-filled bunks—a Russian hospital train. From our windows we could look right into the hospital train. And the wounded Red Army men could look directly into ours. They leaned on the windows, drinking mugs of *chi* and munching black bread, and staring at our luxury only six feet away.

"Comes the revolution!" muttered one of the Americans. The next time we went into the dining car we drew the blinds. It was no use suggesting to our hosts that the luxury was out of place—they would have been insulted.

At another time a party of correspondents flew down to Kharkov, which had just been liberated. When the plane landed the Russians hurried away. They did not return for six hours. The correspondents huddled in their airplane as long as they could stand it, and finally begged some hot tea from a kindly Red Air Force officer. When the Russians returned, it developed that something had gone wrong with the local arrangements—the banquet had not been ready.

But that had been corrected. At 1 A.M., the shivering newsmen sat down to a feast which met the requirements of protocol.

On another occasion, flying back from the Ukraine, our schedule was disrupted and we made an unscheduled stop at Kharkov. We were trundled into the one hotel in Kharkov which was running at that time—a fine clean building which had just been rehabilitated. We congratulated ourselves on our luck. But after we had waited in the lobby an hour while they evicted Russian civilians, including several quiet but puzzled children, to give us rooms, we were ready to march back to the airport and camp on the field.

But the foreigner must have the best—whether it is a banquet in starving Leningrad or a hotel room in rubbled Kharkov.

A good many correspondents, myself included, got to the point where we hesitated to suggest projects to the press department. Conditions were so bad in Russia that we disliked to propose something which would utilize badly needed food and transportation. I know one correspondent who bitterly reproached himself for forcing the Russians to use gasoline to cart him around when it was so needed at the front. It did no good to tell the Russians that you would share pot luck with them. The Soviet war correspondents lived at the front and shared the mess—whatever it might be—and the bunks. But it did not take long to learn that a Russian felt that it was a matter of personal and national honor that the foreigner got special treatment. I have curled up on the floor for a good three-hour nap, while tired Russian officials scurried around to find “suitable” quarters.

When I first went on trips in Russia I tried not to eat too much, in order to leave more for the local Russians, whose appetites at the banquets betrayed the deficiency of the local diet. But I found that this was adding insult to

injury—since the banquet had been prepared for me at great sacrifice and if I did not eat, it was assumed that I did not appreciate the food.

Then, there was the factor of safety. One phase of the traditional Russian doctrine regarding foreigners was that the Russian in whose charge they were was personally responsible for their safety. Russians take this literally. If a Russian exposes you to danger, he subjects himself to reprimand. If you are injured while in his care, he is responsible. If you are killed while in his custody, the penalty for the Russian—theoretically at least—might be death.

I never heard of a case where a Russian actually suffered as a result of anything which happened to a foreigner. But, in contrast, I never met an official Russian upon whose mind this possibility did not weigh heavily. And the ordinary Soviet citizen felt it, too. For example, some American tank specialists came to Russia during the war. They went out to a tank factory about a hundred miles from Moscow to help the Russians on a production problem. A few days after they arrived there was a German air raid. The Americans thought nothing of it. They had been through more serious ones in London. But the Russians were greatly concerned. When they got a warning the next night that a second attack was anticipated, the Russians insisted on driving the Americans five miles out of town and parking them inside a tank until the all clear sounded. The Americans thought this was silly. If the positions had been reversed, the Russians would have shared the dangers with us. We do not feel personally responsible for the physical safety of a foreigner who is visiting us. Our feeling is that the guest becomes one of us; we do special things for him, yes, but the greatest compliment is to take him in as one of us.

Not so the Russian. His tradition is as deeply bred as

ours, and he takes it seriously. But the rule is not inflexible. Not long after we set up our shuttle bombing bases in the Ukraine the Germans came over one night and plastered one of the fields. The Russians were in charge of defense against air attack.

The success of the raid led many Americans to think that General Perminov, the Russian commander of the base, would be ousted. Many assumed he would be shot. Actually, nothing of the kind happened. Perminov kept his post, and the Russians took the view, officially, that the Americans were responsible for the disaster.

Stalin himself told a caller. "It was too bad the Americans did not take the advice of the Red Air Force. When Soviet planes come in from a mission they always circle around and watch for any enemy planes that may be following. If they find one, they kill it. If your people had taken our advice, this incident would not have happened."

Only occasionally during the war did correspondents in Russia get within the sound and sight of battle. Once, however, after the breakthrough of the central group of German armies around Minsk the correspondents reached the scene before the mopping up of a great encirclement had been completed. Three of them drove out one day in a jeep with a press department attaché. Before they realized it, they found themselves between the Russian and German lines with shots from both sides whooshing overhead. The shocked and startled press officer had led his correspondents right into the middle of a first-class battle.

A few minutes later half a dozen bedraggled Germans came walking down the road, hands overhead, and surrendered to the correspondents. This event was absolutely unique. The press officer almost broke down from nervousness before he got his charges back. The correspondents' reaction was that they had a wonderful story. The press

officer was reprimanded by his chief for exposing foreigners to danger.

Another thing that limited trips to the front was official red tape. Correspondents were accredited to the press department of the Foreign Office—not to the Red Army. The mechanism of arranging a trip was this. The press department would contact the higher-ups of the Foreign Office as to whether a trip by the correspondents, to the Crimea, say, would be a good thing from the Soviet standpoint. The higher Foreign Office officials would examine the suggestion in the light of the general diplomatic situation and possible propaganda benefits. If it approved, the press department could go forward with arrangements. The decision whether to make a trip or not was never based on the desires of the correspondents or the pure news potentialities, as such.

The press department then would approach the Red Army command in Moscow and say that it desired to take some foreign correspondents to the Crimea as soon as military operations there had been concluded. The Red Army command would pass on the request to the Front Command, which then had the responsibility of picking the date of the trip, arranging facilities for the correspondents, assigning officers as escorts, and arranging a general itinerary. The press department would outline to the command, in general, what it desired the correspondents to see. The success of the trip thus depended largely on the initiative of the Front Command and its conception of what should be shown or told to the correspondents.

The greatest drawback was the tendency of Front Commands to regard the correspondents as tourists. They would go to great lengths to see that we had fine quarters, and they would arrange lavish banquets, but they often spent more time taking us on a tour of historical palaces than briefing us on the battle.

Often, Red Army officers invited the correspondents to come back and stay longer. Often, when we got to know the fighting officers they would ask us why no Allied correspondents were at the front. We explained that we would like nothing better but that, unfortunately, we were accredited only to the Foreign Office, not to the Red Army—a very important distinction.

The Red Army had no system of accreditation. Soviet war correspondents were officers in the Army. They had military rank and, if necessary, participated in the fighting. The Red Army had no public relations officers, and no special communications facilities for correspondents. The Soviet war correspondents simply joined a particular unit, shared its mess and quarters, and sent back their dispatches by any means available. Speed was not so vital for them. Often, their dispatches would appear a week to a month after the event. Most of their stories were accounts of individual heroism which made just as good reading whenever they appeared as the day they happened. It was a constant puzzle to the Russians as to why the agency correspondents fought to clear their dispatches a minute or two ahead of a competitor's.

If the Red Army had allowed foreign correspondents to stay at the front, it would have meant assigning a crew of bilingual public relations officers. It would have meant special communications facilities, since the ordinary Russian wireless or telegraph operator could not transmit copy in English. It would have meant field censors and, with the Russian attitude toward foreigners, it would have meant special messes, special quarters, special transportation—all in all, a formidable undertaking.

There was another factor, too—departmental jealousy. We were accredited to the press department of the Foreign Office. If we were accredited to the Red Army, the press de-

partment would be forced to share jurisdiction over us. It was too much to expect bureaucrats voluntarily to give up such a large share of their authority.

As I was told many times, "the Soviet Union does not recognize the institution of the foreign war correspondent." This simply meant that there never had been any foreign war correspondents in Russia, and nobody was going to change the situation.

If all these reasons were not enough, there was the final factor of security. Security, as I have suggested, is almost a superstition with the Russians. They have pre-Revolutionary reasons for security. They have Revolutionary reasons. They have post-Revolutionary reasons.

Security might mean that I could not cable abroad the fact that the moth-eaten camouflage was being removed from the Moscow buildings, or that the Uralmach plant was located at Sverdlovsk where it had been for ten years before the war. Or the caliber of guns on a Yak fighter, although hundreds of them had been shot down by the Germans. It might mean that we correspondents were not allowed to talk to wounded Red Army men in a hospital in the Ukraine, although *Pravda* and *Red Star* correspondents were allowed to interview American G.I.'s a few miles away to their hearts' content. It might mean that we could not inspect Russian fighter planes, although a few hundred yards away our officers were taking the covers off the Norden bombsight and showing Red Air Force men how it worked. It might mean that you could not find out the circulation figures for *Red Star* (because the bulk of the circulation went to the Army) nor the number of people who died in the siege of Leningrad.

Security was elastic and amorphous and omnipresent. It sat down with you at banquets and it followed you out into the fields. It restricted correspondents to a fifty-kilometer

radius of Moscow. More than anything else, it was a state of mind.

It was like the censorship. No one laid down any orders for the censors. They had no list of rules by which to judge copy, no catalog of "stops." It was a symphony played entirely by ear, in which the guiding principle was—in doubt, don't. Or—you can never get into trouble by saying too little or by cutting too much.

There is a curious thing about Russian censorship, a very personal thing. For years before the war there was a strict censorship on outgoing cables and telegrams. But there was no censorship on outgoing telephone calls. Correspondents could, and did, telephone any information they wanted to out of Moscow and only rarely were they reprimanded for sending abroad stories which, if submitted as cables, would have been killed. So far as I could figure out, this was due to the personal nature of the censorship—each censor individually was responsible for copy which he read. But if the material did not pass through his hands he did not care whether it was published or not.

This situation still obtains. For example, when Eric Johnston made his trip in Russia the censors made many cuts in the copy submitted by the correspondents who accompanied him. When the correspondents protested that the eliminated material would be published abroad in articles which Johnston and Bill White had contracted to write, the censor's reply was: "We are not interested in what is written abroad about this trip. We are only interested in what you write from Moscow." Yet the material which was cut had been eliminated, supposedly, on grounds of military security!

IV

Under such conditions, the correspondents had been locked in a succession of battles with the press department

for weeks before the Fleming incident. There had been the spectacular "battle of Poltava." This now centered around coverage of the initial shuttle-bombings by the United States Strategic Air Forces. Several days before the first operation, Major-General John Russell Deane, chief of the American military mission in Moscow, told the American and British correspondents, in confidence, about the forthcoming operations. He said he was going to arrange with the Russians so that all of us, and as many Russian correspondents as were interested, could go down to write the story. This was to be the first coordinated military effort by Russia with her Western allies and, as such, it was hoped to make it a spectacular example of inter-Allied cooperation. Deane himself was handling the press arrangements with the Russians.

There was an atmosphere of hardly concealed excitement in Moscow during the next few days. Deane conferred with Molotov and with General Novikov, head of the Red Air Force, and the arrangements seemed to be progressing smoothly. We met with him and went over every point—just what we would be allowed to say, how the copy was to be flown back to Moscow, the essential facts of the first operation, etc. For most of us it was the biggest story we had had in Russia.

We explained Soviet censorship to the general, and the necessity for careful consultation if the operation was to work out smoothly. He said that Molotov had assured him that proper instructions would be issued.

On the afternoon of May 31, word was passed around confidentially that the operation was set up for the next day or the day after, and that we would go down to the Ukraine on June 1. Up to this point the press department had said nothing about the trip nor had the correspondents, under their pledge of secrecy to Deane, mentioned it to the Rus-

sians. Our word was, however, that the department would notify us of the trip that evening and that the take-off would be in the morning.

That evening I prepared for the trip, packing my musette for an early take-off, and waited for the call from the press department. By midnight it had not come, and I went to bed. Something had postponed it, I thought. But just before 1 A.M. the telephone rang. It was the press department. I was to be at Moscow military airport at 8 A.M., for a trip. They would not tell me anything more about it.

On a hunch, I called one or two of the American correspondents. They had heard nothing of the trip. They, in turn, called some friends, and within the next hour the phones in the Metropole sizzled. After a check of every British and American correspondent, it was found that only eight had been invited to go—the three agency correspondents, U.P., A.P. and Reuters, the two broadcasters, CBS and NBC, one American newspaper correspondent and two British journalists.

General Deane was routed out of bed, and explained that he had been told late that day that only four correspondents could go. He had argued the Russians up to eight, which seemed the best he could do. He was "sorry as hell" but did not know why there had been the last-minute breakdown.

After a hasty nightshirt indignation meeting, a delegation of correspondents marched to the press department. Two correspondents arrived ahead of their colleagues, had an angry interview with an underling, the only one on duty at 3 A.M., who said there was nothing he could do about it. When the main body of protestants arrived they found the press department locked up. Efforts to reach the department by phone were equally futile.

Although the press corps in Moscow was usually so torn

by jealousy and strife that it could never agree on anything, an agreement was reached about 4 A.M., among all the correspondents—the invited and the uninvited as well—that on this story there would be a united front. All the correspondents would go to the Moscow military airport at 8 A.M. Unless all were taken to the Ukraine, none would go. Since the press department was not answering its telephone, it was impossible to notify it of the correspondents' decision. The indignation meeting then broke up, and the correspondents retired to catch an hour or two of sleep.

A little after eight in the morning eighteen correspondents assembled at the Moscow military airport. There had been rain during the night, and it was a fresh, sunshiny day. A few minutes later the representatives of the press department arrived—Okhov and one of the Russian-speaking clerks. The correspondents stated their case to Okhov. At first he tried to brazen the thing out. He said it was impossible to take the other correspondents. The correspondents then said they would not go under such circumstances. A half dozen Russian correspondents and cameramen looked on with curiosity as the argument waxed.

Okhov said he had no authority to change the arrangements. The correspondents suggested that he talk to some one in authority. Okhov got mad. The correspondents got mad. Everyone sat around in the sunshine, and we glared at each other like small children. Okhov finally telephoned the press department, and returned with word that the arrangements would stand and that we must now go to the airplane. No one budged. He telephoned again and came back to say that there was no room on the plane for the other correspondents, but if the invited correspondents would board the plane the matter of the others would be taken up later. The correspondents refused to budge. This child's game went on for nearly three hours, when Okhov

after a final conference with Petrov yielded his ground completely. All but two of the correspondents were to be permitted to go. The two would come on a later plane.

Naturally, the press department and Okhov were greatly angered at this defiance by the correspondents. The correspondents, in turn, were equally angered at the press department for attempting to exclude half of them from one of the best stories they had had an opportunity to cover.

From later remarks made by press department officials, it appeared that the row stemmed from a typical misunderstanding. Between the time the correspondents heard that the shuttle-bombing story was forthcoming and the actual operation, the press department had suggested several trips to correspondents—trips to collective farms and similar projects. Because they knew that the shuttle-bombing story was coming up the newsmen said they did not want to leave Moscow at this time. But the press department had not heard of the shuttle-bombing. It thought that the correspondents did not want to leave because of the possibility that the second front would be opened. So when the Ukraine trip came up, the department, thinking that everyone wanted to stay in Moscow, arbitrarily arranged for only a small group to go to Poltava.

Immediately on the heels of this incident came two more which inflamed press relations.

Eric Johnston had come to Russia and was going to make an extensive tour. First he was to be taken to Leningrad, and then he was going to tour the Urals, Siberia and Central Asia. Two of the correspondents, Lawrence of the *New York Times*, and myself, had made tentative arrangements long in advance to accompany Eric on his trip if the Russians would permit this. A third correspondent, Dick Lauterbach, of *Time Magazine*, had also asked to go on the Urals trip, and Johnston had agreed to take all three of us, plus

an Associated Press correspondent, if the Russians had no objection.

All was going well, and it appeared that we would be allowed to go. We had not planned to accompany Johnston to Leningrad, since we had all been there. However, Eric suggested that we come along, and added that the Russians had promised to take him up to the Finnish front, which had just become active after a couple of years of quietude—a possible story.

There was no objection by the Russians to this, but a rumor started among the other correspondents that Johnston was going to the Finnish front and was taking four correspondents with him. The press corps erupted in indignation and descended upon the press department, en masse. The press department had nothing whatever to do with Johnston's trip, since Johnston was the guest of the foreign trade department. It was not the fault of the press department that Johnston had invited certain correspondents to go with him, or that the foreign trade department had given its permission. Theoretically, at least, the press department knew nothing about the Johnston trip.

However, so indignant were the correspondents that the press department, probably hoping to take the bad taste of the Poltava affair out of the correspondents' mouths energetically set about arranging its own trip to Leningrad and "the Finnish Front." With an excess of enthusiasm, the department assured the correspondents that they would really go right up where the fighting was—something that never had happened before.

So we had the weird spectacle of two rival groups of correspondents setting off for Leningrad almost simultaneously. The feeling among the group not invited to go with Johnston was so bitter at those who had been invited to go with him that when both arrived in Leningrad and were lodged

in adjoining rooms at the Astoria hotel, they would not speak to each other.

The Johnston correspondents got there a day ahead of the other group. They were duly taken out to the "front"—the usual business of coming up to the rear areas twenty-five or thirty miles behind the line of action. The Johnston correspondents were hardly surprised. That was what they had kept telling the other correspondents. But, to tease their rivals, they came back to the Astoria highly secretive and hinting that they had gotten a wonderful story. The press department group sneered openly. The next day *they* were really going up to the front. So the next day the press department group was taken out over the identical route followed by the Johnston group. They did not even get far enough forward to hear the artillery. When the correspondents got to the most advanced point to which the Russians would take them, they piled out of their bus and conducted a roadside indignation meeting. They demanded either to be taken right up to the fighting lines or to be returned to Moscow forthwith.

There was an angry argument, in which all parties lost their tempers. Then the correspondents piled into their bus and went back to the Astoria. That night speaking relations between the two groups were resumed, and both sides washed down their sorrows with copious *do adnas* in vodka. Once again they had formed a common front against the common enemy, the press department.

The press department officials were shocked and alarmed by the backfiring of their attempt to mollify the correspondents. All the way back on the press department train the correspondents railed at and bedeviled their Russian escorts until one befuddled press official went around among the correspondents offering to arrange a second tour of Leningrad and the front, to take off the evening of the day they

got back to Moscow. Needless to say this scatterbrained idea only provoked more indignation from the wrathful correspondents.

Thus, by the time the two trips to Leningrad were over, the correspondents' ranks were more or less united again, despite the bitterness of the row which had led to the rival Leningrad trips.

The Leningrad trip was a minor junket beside Johnston's tour to the Urals and Asia. The second tour was to be the most extensive any foreigner had made in Russia in many, many years—probably the most extensive ever arranged. It was to start at Magnitogorsk and continue through Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Tomsk, Alma-Ata, Tashkent, Samarkand, Bokhara and Ashkhabad. This itinerary was known to only Lawrence, Lauterbach and myself, but it was generally realized that a very unusual opportunity was in store for any one who went with Eric.

Up to this point the foreign trade department had indicated no objection to Johnston's plan for taking a group of reporters with him. However, when the matter was raised after the Leningrad trip the foreign trade people said that, since the correspondents were accredited to the press department, the project must be taken up with that department. This had an ominous ring. Too often we had taken up matters with the *Atdel Pyachati* and got nowhere. Particularly after the events of the past month, we doubted that Appalon Petrov would be in a mood to grant us any favors. It seemed obvious that the press department, aroused by the difficulties of the past month, had already intervened with the foreign trade commissariat against permitting us to make the trip.

When we spoke to Petrov, we found his mind made up. We were not to go under any circumstances. It would not be fair to our colleagues. We asked whether this criterion was

to be observed by the department in the future—since the department had been notorious in the past for giving out special trips to its “pets,” the correspondents who always saw the brighter side of things in the Soviet Union. No, indeed, Petrov assured us, the press department would not promise not to discriminate in the future. Nevertheless, he proposed to “protect” the other correspondents against the consequences of our trip. We asked him if we could appeal his decision to higher levels of the Foreign Office. “*Puzhhalista*,” he said, “but it will do you no good.” This appeared to put an end to our chances, unless the question was raised directly with Stalin by Johnston

Then came an unexpected development. Alec Werth, the correspondent of the *Sunday Times* of London, who had been more angry than any of the others who had not been invited to go to Leningrad, heard of Petrov’s attitude. He regarded it as most unfair, and offered to circulate a petition among the correspondents stating that they had no objection to our trip. “After all,” Alec said, “the rest of us can’t go under any circumstances. If you four go, it will set a precedent and later on others will be able to go. The reporting of this trip will mark a great advance in relations with Russia, and I think the correspondents should support you.”

Alec’s petition was signed by every correspondent in Moscow. I do not know who was most surprised by this—the correspondents themselves, or Petrov when we returned to tackle him again. But he would not budge. Soviet officials are loath to change their positions and, also, I presume he realized that if he yielded in our instance he would be plagued with requests for trips to the Urals. He said the petition did not change the situation. He would go on protecting the correspondents, whether they wanted protection or not. The afternoon before Johnston was to leave, we sent a letter to

Vishinsky, asking him to overrule Petrov, but time was so short we hardly hoped for any results

Johnston was seeing Stalin that evening and he promised that, if we did not get a favorable answer from the press department before he left for his interview and if Harriman offered no objection, he would put the request directly to the Marshal.

Ten minutes before he left Spasso House we checked the press department and Vishinsky's secretary. No change in either sector. We advised Johnston, and he left for the Kremlin. He had promised to give a press conference after his interview with Stalin. So the correspondents assembled at Spasso House at mid-evening to await his return from the Kremlin.

A couple of hours passed before Johnston got back—long, slow hours. The four of us who were going with Johnston—if Johnston asked Stalin and if Stalin approved—were glum and despondent. We did not believe Harriman thought much of the proposal, and we were afraid the Foreign Office had committed itself so firmly against us that Stalin would not reverse them.

At five minutes to midnight Johnston strode into the room where we were waiting, Harriman following behind him. Johnston smiled, and stood waiting for everyone to settle himself. Finally all was quiet. Johnston paused dramatically.

"First of all," he said, "there is something I want to tell four young men who have been awaiting my return with great anxiety. I spoke to Marshal Stalin about their desire to go with me on my trip tomorrow. The Marshal said that they"—he paused, while we waited with our hearts in our throats—"may accompany me."

After filing the story of the Johnston-Stalin conference, I got a call from the press department.

"Mr. Petrov wants you to know that he finds it possible for you to go with Mr. Johnston," the secretary said.

"Yes," I said, "I understand that he does."

Thus, three times within a month the press department had been involved in serious controversy with the correspondents. And three times it suffered what could hardly fail to appear to its officials as humiliating defeats.

Then came the Fleming case. In the light of what had gone before it was small wonder that Fleming was treated rudely. Yet even his case involved a humiliation for poor Petrov. He, whatever his deficiencies of knowledge and temperament, was conscientious. When Okhov lodged the complaint against Fleming, reported earlier in these pages, Petrov tried to settle the matter amicably. He knew very well that Okhov was at fault. Fleming was liked and respected by the press department. He did not demand unreasonable things.

Okhov was a new man. He had caused the press department trouble on his first assignment, that to the American bases in the Ukraine, and probably had been reprimanded for his conduct there. But in attempting to smooth over the Fleming matter, Petrov only let himself in for more trouble. It did not take much insight to see that the trouble over Fleming stemmed from Okhov's injured feelings.

Before he had been assigned to the press department Okhov had worked for Vice-Commissar Dekanozov. When Petrov tried to smooth over the row with Fleming, Okhov carried his protest over his chief's head to his former boss, Dekanozov. He said that his honor and that of the Narkomindel was at stake, and that Petrov was refusing to act. Dekanozov, unconcerned with the facts of the incident, but aware that the press department had been scored off by the correspondents during recent weeks, supported Okhov and flatly ordered Petrov to settle the matter to the satisfaction

of the honor of the Narkomindel. Under these circumstances Petrov had no alternative. To protect his own position he had to deal with Fleming quickly and dramatically—and he had to be tough.

I do not believe the Russians enjoyed this affair any more than the correspondents did. And I am certain that they resent the state of their press relations with the Western world as much as the correspondents do. But I am equally certain that they have very little idea of what can be done to improve them, and that they are almost psychopathically allergic to suggestions from the outside.

It is going to take a long time for any improvement, and in the interim, any notion that the Russians are masters of world propaganda is ridiculous.

v

Such conditions as these have led even the correspondents most sympathetic toward the Soviet to gnash their teeth. Edgar Snow, for example, has characterized the operations of the press department as amounting frequently to "sabotage of the war effort." Paul Winterton, the distinguished correspondent of the London *News-Chronicle* who spent more than three years of the war in the Soviet Union and whose voice, carried by the British Broadcasting Corporation, was listened to by millions of Britons as the authentic medium of the Red Army's gallant fight, left Moscow bitter and angry.

Winterton made a major contribution of great value to Russia. During the war no reports over the B.B.C. were more widely listened to than his, because they told with sympathy and understanding the progress of Russia's magnificent stand against Germany. The Russians liked Winterton, and appreciated his influence upon British public opinion. I have heard Soviet officials state this very frankly.

But that did not mean that they lifted as much as their little finger to assist him in reporting the story of Russia's fight against Germany. At every turn he met the same impenetrable morass of red tape, reluctance or antagonism toward any first-hand or objective reporting in the Western sense.

When he returned to London early in the summer of 1945, Winterton frankly said. "No useful purpose is served by newspapers having special correspondents in Moscow. As long as present conditions for foreign newspapermen prevail, they might as well pack their bags and hop the nearest train."

It was Winterton's view that the Soviet policy toward the foreign press was informed and deliberate. He said "It is necessary to conclude that the Russian authorities who are highly suspicious of all foreigners prefer that the news from Russia be covered by Tass (the official agency) and by a minimum number of agencies confining themselves as far as possible to official reports." An honest poll of British and American correspondents who have gone in and out of Moscow in the past three years unquestionably would show that they supported Winterton's analysis.

There can be no doubt that over and above all conflicts of interests and ideologies between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union the complete lack of understanding in the field of public information and press policy is the largest single contributor to difficulty.

The Russians will tell you, sincerely and honestly, that the Western press is an equally serious offender; that anti-Russian stories and editorial comment in the American and British newspapers are a major cause of misunderstanding. This may be true. But what no Russian official with whom I have ever discussed the matter has been willing to concede is that the Western press is a private undertaking, while

Moscow's treatment of foreign correspondents is wholly a governmental affair.

Until some means of bridging the gap between these two worlds is devised, the responsibility must rest upon Moscow for a stubborn and meaningless contribution to the world's already burgeoning budget of misunderstanding

Night Train for Samarkand

I

The train from Tashkent leaves for Samarkand every evening at midnight, and the 220-mile trip across the Turkestan desert and the Starvation Steppes is supposed to take twelve hours—exactly the running time given by my 1914 Baedeker.

On the evening we were scheduled to leave for Samarkand my three newspaper colleagues and myself were worried, as the clock slowly ticked away the stifling hours. We were afraid that some last-minute catastrophe would prevent us from boarding the train. We were worried for several reasons: Mike, the local Tass correspondent who was supposed to be our guide, had been drinking for hours, alternately vodka, Uzbek wine and Tashkent beer (more like the Milwaukee variety than any I ever drank abroad); Eric Johnston, who had prevailed on the Soviet officials to let us make the unprecedented trip, had flown on that morning to Ashkhabad, and the official who gave the permission had gone with him; and, what was most significant, we were, so far as we could learn, the only correspondents who were to see Samarkand in fifteen years or more.

You cannot exactly call Samarkand the "forbidden city" of Russia, but it is a fact that you can almost count on your fingers the foreigners who have visited Tamerlane's ancient capital since the great Russian commander, Kaufmann, stormed the citadel on May 24th, 1868. The Soviet threw overboard most policies of Imperial Russia—but not that regarding Samarkand. Under the Czars no Russian passport was valid for travel in Turkestan. It was just as difficult to

gain Russian permission to visit Central Asia as it was to go through Khyber Pass or to visit Lhasa. Nor did the October Revolution change this situation in the least. If you go to the Soviet today your residence passport will state that it is not valid for travel to or for residence in the Central Asiatic and Far Eastern republics. The language is almost identical with that imprinted on the Czarist passports. Even back in the 'twenties, in what now seem like the idyllic days when a foreigner could walk up to a station window and buy a railroad ticket to almost any place in Russia, you could not go to Samarkand. Anna Louise Strong had a bit of luck and went there in the mid-'Twenties. And fifteen years ago, when the Turk-Sib railroad was opened, a party of foreign correspondents was whisked through the city.

But from that day to this, so far as I can learn, no correspondent has set foot in the city where Tamerlane held court to princes from Cathay and Persia, to Rajahs of India and chieftains of the Amur in the golden city of Asia.

I thought of all I had heard of the city, of Russian friends who had spent months there and called it the fairest spot in the world, of the stories told by Moscow gossips that here in the secret interior the ancient culture of the East flourished, untouched by Soviet Communism. That here Uzbeks and Tadjiks still bought their wives for talons of silver, and traded in the market place for ivory and gems and the spices of the East as though Lenin never had lived. There were other stories told in Moscow, half in hints and half in whispers, of ruthless government methods, of an iron rule by alien commissars which had stamped out native folkways and imposed a "*diktat*" by Moscow. And there were tales of thousands of German prisoners laboring in the salt deserts, and of more thousands of disloyal deportees from the Crimea and portions of the Caucasus who were expatiating

their treachery by exile to these remote parts. And here, some whispered, still lived hundreds or even thousands of those who were purged in 1937, doomed to live and die in the dust and heat and changeless toil of the desert.

And above all there was the burning question—what was happening in Samarkand? What *had* happened in Samarkand? Why was the region sealed off so that there was hardly a living person outside of Russia who knew what happened there?

To me the very word "Samarkand" was fragrant with mystery and enigma Samarkand . . . Bokhara . . . Ferghana . . . Tashkent, itself . . . Names that brought to your nostrils frankincense and myrrh, attar of roses . . . Dew-tipped melons and jewel-tusked elephants . . . Nubians black as ebony, and slave girls from the Caucasus

I wondered what the answer might be, and I thought of Marlowe's "Tamburlaine" and his musky, rolling meter:

. . . Samarcana . . .

There my palace royal shall be placed,
Whose shining turrets shall dismay the heavens,
And cast the fame of Ilion's tower to hell,
Through the streets, with troops of conquer'd kings,
I'll ride in golden armour like the sun!

I took out my thirty-year-old Baedeker. It had little to report, but the pages were strewn with warnings. Every other station on the Central Asiatic railroad was described as "the most unhealthy" in Russia, and there was a solid page of fine-print instructions to any adventurer foolhardy enough to wander into the region. Baedeker offered helpful hints about folding rubber baths, boiled water and avoiding native food. I took another look at my United States Army musette, loaded with two K-rations, a towel and a razor, a change of socks, and a pack of cards in case we got stuck

somewhere. Next to it was my canteen. They had gotten me over a good many thousand miles of Russia, I thought, and no doubt they would get me through Samarkand.

The day in Tashkent had been suffocating. By late afternoon the temperature in the sun was 131 Fahrenheit—and Tashkent was described as cool, compared to Samarkand. We had gone swimming in an overflow pool from the irrigation ditch outside Tashkent. It was like swimming in lukewarm soup—muddy and tepid, except for the spot where the mountain-fed ditch leaked into the pool. Half a dozen Russian girls were swimming there when we showed up. At first they had not liked it much because they saw we were foreigners and jumped to the conclusion we must be *nemet-ski*, Germans. Clucking like hens, they had hurried out of the water, slipping on their cotton dresses over the ragged shifts and burlap pants in which they had been taking their dip. Finally our apologies, the assurances of our Russian companions—plus the heat and the lure of the water—overcame their fears, and they straggled back into the pool.

The swim had been fine, but by the time we had driven the dusty five miles back to the dacha we were hot again. It was too hot to eat, too hot to drink, too hot to move. At nine o'clock we had supper, but I couldn't do more than pick at the fresh tomatoes and cold meats. I went back to my room where a big central fan was slowly whirling the flies around, took off my shirt and trousers, and tried to nap.

It was no use. Darkness had fallen, and I got up and wandered out into the garden, where the air was heavy with the scent of roses and a dozen Asiatic flowers, the names of which I could not even guess. There was a huge full moon rising, fat and red, beyond the eucalyptus trees. As I smoked my cigarette, I could hear in the distance the plaintive monotone of an Uzbek song, accompanied by the wailing thinness of a two-stringed violin.

Finally I tossed away my cigarette and went back inside the datcha. Everyone was nervous—we four Americans and the handful of Russians who were going with us. It was nearly an hour to train time, but we were all packed and ready. As we waited for the cars to come we discovered that no one in the party had even been to Samarkand—not the drunken little Tass man, not the friendly Soviet censor who had learned his English in a Columbia language class, not even the English-speaking Russian girl, Nona, who lived in Tashkent and was our hostess at the datcha.

We threw our scanty luggage into the cars and set off for the station, getting there well ahead of train time. As we drew up in the gloom of the station a curious thing happened. A brisk, middle-aged man in white linen suit stepped up to us and said in English: "Come this way to the train." He guided us through the crowds, explaining that he was "Intourist manager for Tashkent." He spoke good colloquial Brooklynesse. Who he was and how he came to be there I shall never know. After I got back to Moscow I looked up a prewar Intourist pamphlet. Even before the war Intourist had never listed any office at Tashkent.

The Tashkent Express was made up of twenty-four cars. Our car was an ordinary Russian sleeping car, attached just behind the baggage cars. There were eight compartments with pull-down, plush-upholstered bunks, two to a compartment. Our party occupied the whole car: four Americans, our three Russian escorts—the Tass man, the censor and Nona—four NKVD boys (and they really were boys), and an old friend of ours, the waiter from the National Hotel.

The train was sweltering, and thick with flies. And the bunks, we quickly discovered, were well populated with fleas and bedbugs. The National Hotel waiter had been very busy, we noted. In each compartment he had placed a bottle of red wine, a bottle of white wine, a bottle of vodka, a bottle

of brandy and a huge plate of grapes, peaches, pears and apples. He apparently had set out this repast an hour or so before we arrived. It was possible to eat the fruit if you brushed off the flies. I don't know what the temperature was in the compartments, but it certainly was well above 100°, and there appeared to be no water. Later we discovered that our friend from the National had thoughtfully provided four old vodka bottles filled with *kypichani* (boiled water). He had boiled it just before getting on the train, and it was slightly warmer than the wine and vodka, which were at room temperature. In Russia, as in most places in Europe, water is usually more difficult to obtain than champagne. Our National Hotel buddy had brought the *kypichani* along only because we had bullied him into it.

Our train finally gave a mournful toot and lumbered off at 12:20 A.M., the first train I had ever ridden in Russia which did not take off on time.

As we moved off at a leisurely gait, I sat in my compartment and scribbled in my notebook. I headed the entry: "A Strange Day in Russia." I wrote busily as we chuffed along, and the breeze coming in the window gradually cooled the compartment. I had it to myself, because the upper berth which Bob Magidoff was supposed to occupy sagged at such an alarming angle he had retreated to a rear compartment which he shared with our National Hotel friend. Bob had a fitful night, constantly interrupted by the brewing of tea and the breaking out of more vodka for our Russian escorts.

After a while I got up and stood at the window of the train for a long time. We were moving slowly but steadily across the desert in bright moonlight, and a gentle rain of soot was wafted back by the engine. About every twenty minutes we would pull to a halt at some desert station. There was nothing to see—a grim little station dimly

lighted by a single electric bulb, a few passengers getting on and off. For a long time I stood at the window in my shorts, smoking a cigarette and thinking about home—about how far away this was from anything an American knew about, how far from Forty-second Street, and the 6:05 on the New Haven; how far from Minnesota and the corn lands in the Minnesota Valley, and the potato country up along the Red River of the North. The train swayed and rocked and rumbled on in the night. Beyond the swinging doors of my compartment the Russians were drinking *do adnas* in vodka, and having a fine time. I stood at the window, dreaming. I had no map, but I was sure that if you had a map and tried to find the farthest place in the world from the Midwest this would be it—Red Asia . . . on the main line to Samarkand.

I dozed for about three hours, and then awoke with a start and looked at my watch. It was 5:10 A.M., and we were moving steadily across a vast desert in the first false light of dawn. In the distance, as I pushed back the curtains from the window, there was a dim purple silhouette of foothills; but as far as I could see there was nothing . . . no human life, no grazing cattle, no sheep, no grass, no cactus . . . only gray sand and rocks.

This, I thought, must be the Starvation Steppes—the land without water, the land more dreaded than the Gobi desert. Since the Tatars swept in at the time of King John of England, this had been a region of death, a region of fear. Over it in summer simmered a heat more burning than man or animal could endure, and in winter the wind ruled like a tyrant, whipping the sand into the air in a billion icy bullets. For nearly a thousand years caravans had swung north or south of the Starvation Steppes. Only the hardest and bravest warriors dared skirt its dangerous fringe.

I had been told that the term, Starvation Steppes, was too

literal a translation of the Russian name for the region—that the words did not refer to people who had been starved but to a land which was starved for water.

At five o'clock of a July morning, with the thin light of dawn gradually bringing the desert into pale relief, it seemed to me that it made little difference. Obviously, the soil was starved. Equally obviously, man would starve if he tried to live on it.

We drew into a small town. There was a broad plaza beside the station, and from the window I could see half a hundred mud-walled buildings scattered irregularly along the tracks. Back and forth pattered dozens of coppery Uzbek women in white, sacklike gowns and bare feet. There were Russian women, too, and they also were barefoot. On their shoulders they carried earthen water jugs, cement sacks, flour bags and bundles of all sorts. It was cool in the square, and the last faint breezes of the night were still stirring.

On the track next to us a Russian hospital train had halted. Staring from the doors were Red Army men, bare to the waist, many with bandages on their arms and heads. Some of them were munching loaves of bread and drinking their early morning *chi*.

In a moment our train jolted forward again, and as the sun mounted in the sky we moved endlessly across a bleak and barren land. It was obvious that despite the vast irrigation projects of the Soviets there were tens of thousands of acres yet to be tamed.

To the south, but gradually drawing closer, were barren foothills and behind them a distant range of mountains, the snow-clad Hissars, and it seemed that we were gradually ascending to a broad plateau. It was beginning to be hot when we drew into a town which my Baedeker described as probably the least healthy of all in Central Asia. I stared curiously at it. Obviously, it was an old town, long settled.

There was a central park, shaded by trees, and many buildings in the late Victorian style of Russia. It had been a garrison town under the Czars, and that flavor lingered. We got off the train and stretched our legs. A score of women and children wandered down the platform, selling tomatoes, cucumbers, milk, sour cream, eggs and *chi*. We priced the eggs. They were seven rubles apiece, about 60 cents. The Russians swarmed off the train and eagerly bought their breakfasts. We strolled along the wooden platform, eyed by a few of the curious, but it was obvious that we had not been spotted as foreigners. It was not much different from a desert station on the railroad in Persia. The people looked and dressed alike and the buildings were very similar. But there was this difference: here there were no beggars and no children with running sores, no men with sightless eyes. We noticed a Russian Red Cross worker, moving up the platform in a white gown. At first I mistakenly thought she was there to look after our party of foreigners, but that was not it at all. Nurses are regularly assigned to all the long-distance trains in Russia, in case of sudden illness.

We moved on again with the hills on both sides gradually closing in and the country beginning to show a greener hue, until it was evident that we had entered the valley of the Zeravshan, and soon we came to a pass where the railroad crossed the river. The train waited fifteen minutes or so before crossing the bridge (I don't know why), and then rumbled over and through a deep cut in the foothills, emerging into a broad and well irrigated valley, filled with orchards, fields of grain, and herds of cattle and horses. In a few minutes we puffed into Samarkand.

II

It was exactly 11:50 A.M., by the round clock on the station wall—Samarkand time.

Samarkand time . . . We were here. We had actually made it.

We tumbled out of the train, leaving our musettes behind us and, blinking in the burning sun, four or five ill-at-ease officials in rumpled pongee suits walked across the wooden platform to greet us.

Samarkand . . . golden Samarkand . . .

My eyes roved in all directions, seeking to soak in impressions.

What did I see?

A wide railroad yard with half a dozen lanes of tracks. A faded, sooty, yellow brick railroad station with a sprawling freight depot attached. It did not look much different from a depot in Quincy, Illinois, or Muscatine, Iowa. Across the tracks there were some down-at-the-heels one-story buildings, housing little wine-and-soft-drink shops. On the platform there were thirty or forty freight handlers, men and women, Uzbek and Russian, moving sacks and boxes in and out of the terminal.

On an adjoining track stood the Stalinabad express, which pulled in just after our train. Bumming a ride on the cow-catcher was a ragged native woman with wild gray hair, apparently fifty or sixty years old. She wore a torn gunny sack for a dress, and her flat flabby breasts flapped unconcernedly in the breeze. There was no one in sight in native costume. No streets paved with gold, nor temples ruddy with rubies and gleaming with emeralds.

I looked up and down the tracks, looked back at the little officials standing there with fixed polite looks on their faces, and then turned to the sign on the station. Yes, it did say Samarkand. This, then, was the place we had traveled thousands of miles to see, the goal of our ambitions—a grubby little Russian desert town! I felt sick with disappointment.

But now the officials were talking to us, escorting us, it

seemed, to a bus. It also seemed that this was just the Samarkand railroad station, and that Samarkand itself was about five miles away. My heart leaped with hope again, only to sink when I saw the ancient sun-blistered bus in which we were to ride. My misgivings were shared by my companions. We all knew Russian busses well—too well.

I compressed my lips and boarded the bus. What lay ahead I did not know, but I felt sure it would be trouble. On the train it had been cool at dawn, but now it was glowing hot—so hot that you could not touch the metal of your belt buckle, and coins in my pocket were noticeably warm. I had not quite believed the high temperatures reported in Tashkent and Alma-Ata—up in the hundred-and-twenties and hundred-and-thirties. It seemed hot but not that hot, I thought. I had never been anywhere where the temperature was much over 110.

We drove away from the station, and through a curious region which looked something like the Hopi Indian cliff dwellings. It was a strange sight. The land was apparently hard clay desert, with hardly a sign of vegetation. It had been eroded by the wind, I presume, and our road wound among a series of mesas, some as much as 200 feet high. In caves hollowed in the walls of the mesas and in small huts jutting over the cliff edges there were Uzbeks living—hundreds of them. Some caves had little porches crudely built of poles which jutted out at weird angles. Here and there on the mesa tops or on the porches I could see goats gazing idly into space. Clay paths and steps led up almost vertically to these crude habitations. There was something unreal about the whole area, like an artist's concept of the mountains of the moon. Why anyone should live in these strange houses, and how or where they got their water, were mysteries.

Our road wound up from the mesas to a higher plateau

where the land grew fertile and irrigation ditches appeared, weaving in and out of the fields and coursing along the road. Strangely enough the country here looked more like Texas than anything I had seen in Russia—semi-fertile plains and roving herds of horses and cattle. On telephone wires strung along the road mourning doves perched, gray and impassive.

We were going first, it seemed, to a fruit farm rather than to the ancient city. As a matter of fact the officials did not seem to be particularly interested in the ancient city, and I had another sinking feeling—perhaps we were going to see modern Samarkand and by-pass the glories that were Tamerlane!

I contemplated the visit to the fruit farm glumly, and got some inverted pleasure from the fact that our cumbersome bus was too broad to get through the farm gate, so that we had to retrace our steps and approach another entrance to the farm.

I walked into the office of the farm director determined to be bored, no matter what happened. I know little enough about agriculture to start with, and we had visited several Asiatic fruit farms already. The director's room was small and was fitted with the typical director's table, covered in green baize. On the wall was a faded chart displaying varieties of peaches, and on shelves behind the director's desk were fruit specimens in mason jars, each labeled in rusty ink. Now, I thought, we are in for it.

On the green baize table stood several bowls of fruit. They looked good. There were huge peaches, rose and yellow. There were blood-red apricots. There were golden Grimes apples, crisp and firm. There were purplish plums.

All of us had been worried about dysentery on this trip, and we all had had a touch of it at times. The quickest way to get dysentery, of course, was to eat fresh, unpeeled fruit.

The fruit of Tashkent had been too good to resist, and I had sampled it, with no ill effects.

I reached for a peach, and after one bite I threw caution to the winds. I had never tasted such a peach—sweet and juicy as a melon. My notes recorded what followed. Between statistics on the cultivation of fruit in Central Asia and production records of the farm are such interjections as these: "We are eating the best peaches I ever had!" A little further down: "This is the sweetest apricot I ever tasted!"

The prize was the *Kur Sadik*, an apricot. When dried it has a honeylike flavor, so sweet that it is almost like candied fruit. There was also an apricot which, when dried, tasted like a fig, but it was sweeter and the flesh was firmer. Another blood-red variety tasted almost like candied orange peel.

We spent an hour at the fruit farm, and enjoyed every minute of it. Toting up the statistics, we discovered that Bob Magidoff, the NBC correspondent, had taken the honors. He ate ten peaches, each of them about the size of a small cabbage. He also devoured eight or nine fresh apricots, six large apples and an uncertain number of dried apricots. There are a number of statistics on Uzbek agriculture which we never recorded because Bob was too busy eating to translate them.

Stuffing a last *Kur Sadik* into our mouths, we filed out and boarded our gray-sided bus. It had been standing in the sun, and when we eased into the seats you could almost hear our perspiring bodies sizzle.

We rattled into "golden" Samarkand. At first glimpse it looked not unlike Tashkent—a mixture of Russian and Oriental architecture. There was the typical central square in the Russian style lined by buildings of stone and brick erected in Czarist times. The streets were filled with people, many of them in Oriental dress, bright blue and yellow

gowns and, occasionally, a woman still wearing a nose veil, usually a black nose veil, or *paranja*. I noticed many little sidewalk soft-drink establishments. There were others with charcoal braziers, selling meat pastries. And some selling wine and vodka. We went down the main street of Samarkand past the movie house. It was showing Samuel Goldwyn's "North Star."

Our first stop was at the Registan. I don't know whether that name means anything to you. I confess it meant nothing to me until I started to read up on Samarkand. The Registan was a fabulous Moslem center for many centuries. Two really great men have figured in Samarkand's history. The first was Tamerlane or Timur, and the second was his grandson, Ulug Bek. Tamerlane was the conqueror who laid much of the known world of his time in his train. Ulug Bek was a wise and fabulous patron of arts and sciences. He was the builder of the Registan.

The Registan is really two great palaces facing on a central square. The floor space of each, I should judge, is roughly that of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In one of these palaces Ulug Bek housed his priests, and religious scholars. In the other his scientists and philosophers. In the broad square between them was the central market place of Samarkand, a beehive of commerce where everything from rubies and Caucasian slaves to unleavened bread and grain for the horses was sold.

Today, the Registan is a museum. But as late as 1926 it was still a Moslem theological seminary, and it is not unlikely that it may be again. The Central Asiatic branch of the new Soviet religious commission has been set up in nearby Tashkent and is now working on such problems.

By now the noon sun flayed our backs like a quilt. As we stepped out before the Registan, almost alone in the broad plaza, stood a little delegation. There was a young

Russian girl, a middle-aged Russian man and an elderly Uzbek, handsome and dark and carrying a polished, silver-tipped stick. As we strolled across the plaza an argument developed among the three. The girl started toward the left, the Russian to the right and the old Uzbek halted in the middle and tapped angrily with his stick. It turned out that each of them had a different idea of what we should see first.

The girl was an architectural student from Tashkent. She had come to Samarkand only three weeks before to spend five days in making certain comparative studies for her doctoral thesis. But, she said, the Uzbeks had been so hospitable that she had not been able to get away. For Samarkand she had all the enthusiasm of a new convert. The Russian was Boris Zasaipkin, and he was the chief architect of the reconstruction and preservation of the Samarkand monuments. The old Uzbek was named Zakhnov. He was 56 years old, although he looked 70, and had active charge of much of the reconstruction. For years he had been the chief guide to Samarkand.

While they argued about what to show us first, I staired up at the palace façades. They were done in handsome darkish blue enamel tiles, with decorations in turquoise and sky blue. At either end of the palaces were huge, smoke-stack-round columns. Like the tower of Pisa, these columns had started to lean, but about ten years ago the Russians straightened them up. However, the arches were still unsteady and were shored with timbering while the repair work went forward. They had been working at the restoration of the Registan for twelve years, and it was expected to be a ten-million-ruble job. The war, naturally, had interrupted the work, but they had been going forward again, slowly, in the past year.

We entered the palace that had once been a Moslem

seminary, pausing to admire a heavy carved door, six inches thick and a good fifteen feet high. The old Uzbek told us to hurry along. "The door is modern," he said, "it is only 150 years old."

Inside the palace the black stone floors were smooth and cool, and in a series of chambers giving onto an interior courtyard we found the Samarkand Folk Art School where Uzbek children were trained in native folk skills, many of which had completely died out in the long years of Samarkand's cultural degradation. This school was an inheritance from the Moscow Art Institute, which had been evacuated to the Registan in the bleak war days of October, 1941. The Moscow artists had gone back home, but not before they had established this school. In the cluttered rooms of the ancient palace Uzbek youngsters were creating designs, working in gauche, and carving medallions in stone. The designs, for the most part, were conventionalized floral patterns, many of them taken from those which the medieval craftsmen had used to decorate the Registan itself. Quite frequently the motifs were Mohammedan. The favorite Russian subjects, Stalin and Lenin and the hammer and sickle, were largely absent.

Out in the heat once more we found that a considerable crowd had assembled. We were genuine curiosity in Samarkand. I have no idea how long it had been since these Samarkanders had seen any foreigners like us, but most of them probably had never seen such a sight before. The crowd was about half European and half Oriental—women in light Russian smocks and women in a bloomerlike garment of red, gathered at the ankles. In the street donkey caravans laden just as they must have been in Tamerlane's times plodded slowly through the heat.

We lumbered on down the street past a long row of little artisan's huts. Here, as they had four centuries ago, men

stood over their charcoal forges and beat out the copper and iron and steel. They were descendents of the men who were Tamerlane's armorers. In the dark recesses of their huts we could see the gleam of burnished metal, heaps of Oriental rugs which were their couches, and bubbling pots of copper and brass where they brewed their tea.

Beyond the street of artisans lay the bazaar.

It was a hubbub of people. There must have been a couple of thousand Uzbeks, bright in yellow, purple and red robes, wandering and bargaining in the long street of open stalls and stands. From the bus I could see that they were selling all kinds of food—fruits, fresh and dried, soft drinks, tea, vodka and, it appeared, knickknacks and gim-cracks, as well as clothing. It did not look like Russia. It looked like a bazaar in India or Iran or even in Cairo—completely oriental.

To our left beyond the bazaar lay a barren waste that looked vaguely like the sandbox of a child giant. It was a clay wasteland, scattered with humps and elevations and occasional mounds of stones. This is all that is left of the great city of Afro-Siab, the ancient metropolis which stood on this site before Alexander the Great burned it three hundred years before Christ. Just beyond it was a region of almost similar appearance—the Uzbek burying ground, where Samarkand's dead of today are interred among the dusty bones of Tamerlane's warriors.

Beyond this lay the Street of Mausoleums, lined with the graves of Kings. This is the best existing exhibit of Tamerlane's times. This was what we had come so far to see.

Our bus snorted to a halt in front of a long, wide brick staircase which led gently upward probably 200 feet above street elevation. Up these stairs in Moslem times women could come only if they crawled on hands and knees. The regime of the Soviet ended that, although our guides said

that some of the superstitious still clung to the ancient custom.

The tombs are exquisite works, largely done in shades of blue that vary from turquoise to deep purplish, with contrasts in green. Here are buried Kusam-bin Abbaz, Mohammed's cousin, interred in 1400. Our old guide said the mosaics on the walls of this tomb are the best in the world. Here is buried Shah Zinda, called the "living shah" because, when beheaded by his enemies, he jumped into a well and, so runs the legend, has never died. Here are the cousins, the sons, the uncles, the relatives and the wives of Tamerlane. The earliest tomb was built about 1335, the newest, nearly sixty years before Columbus discovered America. Here is the tomb where the Koran is supposed to be buried. But our guide said this was not so.

The tombs are done in mosaics, majorica and terra cotta. Many of them have elaborate fretworks of wood or bronze. Many of them, too, are filled with rubble and junk. And on the walls and even on the beautiful mosaics are scrawled the names of Russian visitors, just as at Grand Canyon or Mammoth Cave.

I noticed that in some caves many mosaics were missing, due apparently not to deterioration but to vandalism.

"Yes," the guide said, "those were not taken by souvenir hunters. It is just an old Uzbek custom. If you have a bad toothache, you come to the Street of Mausoleums, wrench out your tooth and plug in a mosaic of the proper size. It is a kind of self-dentistry. Some of the old Uzbeks still do this."

We reboarded the bus and, past plodding carts and camels loaded high with stacks of straw, made our way out of the city to the crowning gem of the reign of Ulug Bek, the ruins of the observatory he built in 1530. This fabulous relic was discovered less than forty years ago. Once it was the largest

in existence, and the only one in the Eastern world. Today it looks not unlike a subterranean launching platform for V-2's. The exterior is a low Oriental dome, and inside there is a great oblong pit where a pair of curved marble rails have been installed. They are the remnant of a huge quadrant, more than forty yards in radius, which was used to observe the sun and the stars. Scholars have reconstructed the probable layout of the observatory, but they are not certain exactly how it was used.

I was fascinated by the observatory, but my interest was not shared by my colleagues. The site was an utterly bleak and barren desert without a sprig of vegetation, and the temperature was now so high * that we were not bothered by perspiration—it evaporated almost before it could leave our pores. By the time we got back into our bus, it had all the characteristics of a pot-bellied stove with a well-drawing chimney.

On the way back to town I saw a house of straw. It was just like Disney's house of straw. It had a straw roof and straw walls and a straw door. There were no little pigs around, however, just a mahogany Uzbek, fast asleep in the shade of his straw roof. Beyond the straw house was Tamerlane's ancient fortress, the very heart of his empire. Today it looked like a great mud pie, badly squashed.

As we went down the street of artisans again, I saw a brawny Uzbek, naked to the waist. Leather-aproned, he was beating away on a great glistening sword. Next door to his little shop was another establishment. The sign said that radio sets were repaired here.

Not far from the center of town we came to the Tomb of Tamerlane—not an impressive sight from the outside. Its great dome is of blue tile mosaic, but many of the tiles are

* We were told that the temperature in the sun was 161° Fahrenheit but Prof. George Cressey, the noted geographer who was at Samarkand just before us, doubts this figure.

gone and have been filled in with plain clay. Over the centuries, earth tremors have dislodged many tiles. The tomb is set in a little park of shade trees sprinkled with off-the-ground tables where Orientals squat to drink tea and nibble at cakes, and there was a maze of scaffolding around the entrance. Here half a dozen workmen were busy on the job of restoration, matching tiles and mosaics. Walking up a carelessly propped plank, we ducked under a narrow doorway and entered the fabulous tomb which is properly called "Gur Emir." This was by far the most elaborate of the mausoleums. It had been built by Tamerlane himself for his grandsons, but when he died unexpectedly his body had been brought here; and here it still rested, with those of his two sons and his grandsons.

Within the huge carved dome it was murky, and only a little cooler than in the direct sunlight. I could not see the golden inscriptions on the walls. Our guide lighted a kerosene lantern and made his way to a narrow flight of steps. We followed him, our G.I. shoes clattering loudly on the worn, ancient stones. Within the stairway there was a loud buzzing, which became louder as we descended. The staircase was filled with flies—millions of them, it seemed—seeking refuge from the intolerable heat in the cool crypt where lay the remains of the greatest warrior the world had known.

At the foot of the steps the guide held up his lantern, and we saw we were in a tiny chamber in the center of which was set a huge block of black stone. Propping one foot against the stone, I jotted down some notes. The huge block was nephrite, and it weighed two and a half tons. On the face of the stone were inscribed, in Arabic characters, the salient facts of Tamerlane's career. Inside was a marble coffin and within that a wooden coffin, covered with gold and silver leaf, where the body had been placed. Tradi-

tion was that the coffin was ebony, but I do not know whether that is right.

The huge nephrite block had been neatly sawed in two by Czarist scholars who wanted to see whether Tamerlane was really inside He was.

I wanted to get to the bottom of a curious story which I had heard the Germans were broadcasting in propaganda transmissions directed to the Arab world. This story was that in Samarkand there was an ancient legend—that whenever the tomb of the great warrior is opened, war issues forth and engulfs the world. The reckless Bolsheviks, said the Nazi propagandists, thinking to defy this ancient legend, had opened Tamerlane's tomb and let loose the war. As a result, said the Nazi radio, the Asiatic races of Russia were turning against Communism.

It was an intriguing story.

"Has this tomb been opened up in recent times," I asked the guide.

"Yes," he said, "several times."

"When was it last opened," I asked.

"Just a few years ago," he said. "It was opened and the skeleton of Tamerlane was taken out and sent to Tashkent, where it was photographed and measured. It was found that his right arm was solid without a joint, apparently due to calcification, and that his right knee could not be bent; from which, it was obvious, his name meaning 'the crippled one' was derived."

"When," I asked, "did your scientists carry out this interesting examination?"

"The tomb," said the guide, "was opened on June 15, 1941. The task of examining the skeleton and artifacts was completed June 22, 1941."

"You mean the day the Germans attacked Russia?" I asked.

"The very day," he replied, taking up his lantern and leading the way back up the staircase of the million buzzing flies.

Outside again sun stabbed us like a sword. I watched the workmen busy with the ancient tiles, and noticed that several of them were youths of 13 and 14. They were, it appeared, students from the new Samarkand handicraft school, and one of them was the son of our old guide. They had resumed restoration work a little more than a year ago, just a couple of months after Stalingrad had ended Hitler's threat to Soviet Asia, and they hoped to finish the job in the autumn of 1945, at a cost of three million rubles. That was something to remember—less than ninety days after Stalingrad, work on the restoration of this historic relic had started forward again. I wondered whether British scholars had resumed their probing in the tombs of the Pharaohs two months after El Alamein.

III

We drove back across the old Russian town with its huge promenade—twelve long lanes of trees, poplars, *karagach*, cypress and eucalyptus. Then into a narrow lane between two mud walls and through a gate into the courtyard of a lovely datcha—the datcha of the City Soviet of Samarkand. It was a stucco building, and there was a wide shaded walk leading around the house to a rambling Victorian veranda which formed two sides round a pool and fountain where large goldfish were swimming lazily.

We begged, first a drink of water, and second, a place where we could take a shower. Never, I think, had I been so hot and thirsty as at that moment.

Our hosts led us around the veranda to a long table, covered with white linen and laden with fruit, peaches, grapes, apricots and apples. Laden with tomatoes and cu-

cumbers and onions and radishes Laden with fine china, glass and silver. Laden with bottles of white wine and red wine and vodka. With sausage and fish and cheese and liquid butter.

Would we care for some wine, our hosts inquired? No, we said, hoarsely, could we have some water? Perhaps, they said, we would like a glass of champagne? We thanked them profusely. Water, we croaked—just plain old water would be swell Unfortunately, they said, they had no mineral water. That was all right, we interposed, hastily, plain water would be wonderful. There was a moment of embarrassment and then they said shyly that they had no boiled water. By this time our tongues were so thick that we were tempted to start lapping up the goldfish pool. "That's quite all right," we gulped, wondering what germs Samarkand might have that we were not inoculated against, "we'd be pleased to drink unboiled water." With obvious reluctance our hosts summoned a waitress and gave the necessary order. They mentioned that it was not wise to drink unboiled water. We flopped into wicker chairs and waited. Finally the waitress returned, bearing a small pitcher filled with a cloudy yellow liquid that looked like chicken consommé. We gulped down a few wet wonderful mouthfuls and asked for directions to the shower.

This proved to be an open-air cubicle about the size of a bathhouse dressing room, with an attachment out of which water trickled—hot water. The reason for this was that the water came from a big overhead tank which the sun had heated almost to the boiling point. There was a bar of soap, apparently compounded of emery-dust and pumice. Hot or not, the shower was a life-saver and, plastering down our wet hair, we clattered back over the piazza and collapsed into the chairs. The veranda was fragrant with flowers. There were lovely roses in the garden, sun-

flowers along the walk and vines on the porch pillars. Around the portico of the porch there was a fringe of blue Ukrainian curtains.

At another time, in another place and in another setting the dinner would have been wonderful. There was a cold borsch (naturally lukewarm because of the heat). There was a kind of fried chicken, which was the only thing I ate. There was shashlik of mutton, there were fine salads of tomatoes and cucumbers and sour cream. There was a whole six-course Russian dinner, too, with beef stroganov. Unfortunately it was too hot to eat. There were wonderful wines, both white and red—the vineyards of Samarkand are famous. But it was too hot to drink, except for beer—and there was no beer. We could not help mentioning the wonderful cold beer of Tashkent, the best we had had since we left America. Ah, they told us, we should taste the Samarkand beer. Unfortunately the brewery had been closed down and would not be open until next week. The ice plant, too, was shut down.

I am afraid the heat affected our tempers. I know it did mine. Five minutes after we had sat down to the table we were shouting at each other—except for the quiet little Uzbek mayor, who looked like a dark Italian. Even-tempered Bob Magidoff got so angry that he announced he would not translate any more. Finally Dick Lauterbach, equally even tempered, announced that he could sit at the table no longer without killing someone, so he was going over to get a shave. In the corner of the piazza two barbers were busily at work. While we had been engaged in hostilities, our friends of the NKVD were treating themselves to shaves and shampoos.

Dick came back in about fifteen minutes.

"They've got a story," he said. "One of the barbers is a Pole and the other is a Bokhara Jew. I couldn't get much

out of them because two of the 'boys' were waiting for a shave. See what you can get."

I excused myself and went over to the corner. I thought to myself: "Here you are in golden Samarkand, the hardest place in the world to get to. And what do you do? You have a shave, the first barber-shop shave you have ever had." It did not seem to make much sense.

I settled down in the black leather armchair and let the barber lather my face. I had drawn the Pole, a Polish Jew from Krakow. He had been in Samarkand for several years. He talked a little French and a little German. In a pigeon mixture of French, German and Russian he managed to make me understand that "things were *ochun ploho*—very bad," that he couldn't leave Samarkand and that things had happened which he would like to tell me about. Dick had drawn the Bokhara Jew, who had shaken his head when he learned we were not to go to Bokhara.

"You should go there," he said, "very bad things have happened there."

I found that I knew too little Russian and my barber knew too little French to make it possible for us to understand each other. I relaxed in the chair and let him scrape my whiskers off. At least I would not have to listen to the arguments at the table. Finally he daubed my face lightly with eau de cologne, and I wandered back to find that the heat had burned out all contentiousness and the party was sitting talking quietly.

"We are very sorry that Mr. Johnston could not come," said the Uzbek mayor. "We had been expecting him until the last moment."

We said that we knew Johnston's disappointment was equal to theirs but that apparently their airport was not big enough for his plane. They shook their heads sadly. Yes, that was it. It was too short. They had been working the

last three weeks, trying to lengthen it so the DC-3 could land but, it was still too short. That was reassuring news, because it agreed with what Vice-Commissar Glukhov had told us in Tashkent, although when he first told the story we had feared it was just an excuse to keep us from seeing Samarkand.

"When was the last time that foreign journalists came to Samarkand?" I asked.

The mayor, the first and second assistant mayors, the other officials put their heads together. They could not remember that any foreign journalists had ever been in Samarkand before.

What about the time when the "Turk-Sib" railroad was opened?

Well, they agreed there probably were some journalists who passed through Samarkand on that occasion, but they had no recollection of the event.

"Well, then," I said, "when was an American last in Samarkand?"

Very recently, they replied—only last month.

This was a real surprise. Who could this possibly have been we asked?

The Uzbeks were a little puzzled themselves as to who he had been. A scientist, they said, a geographer. A very strange person, too, they agreed. They had met him with an official welcome and provided him with an interpreter because he did not know the language; but he said he did not want an interpreter, and sent the man off after two days. He had stayed a week and apparently spent his time, for the most part, studying the ancient buildings.

Later on we established that this visitor was both a geographer and a geologist. He was Professor George B. Cressey of Syracuse University. He had been attached to the American Embassy in Chungking and had obtained permission to

come through Russia and visit Samarkand on his way home from Chungking.

Had any other foreigners been to Samarkand, we asked.

"Oh, yes," said the mayor, "the British."

This was startling, but we concealed our surprise and said: "The British?"

"Yes, indeed," said the mayor, "they come frequently to Samarkand."

So curious did this seem that we decided not to pursue the questioning any further; but when we returned to Moscow we made a careful check. After all it was faintly possible that the British had come there to check on the status of the Polish internees, although this was not likely since Australia, rather than Britain, was the protecting power.

The amazement of the British Embassy exceeded ours when we told them of the Samarkand mayor's statement. No members of the British Embassy had been anywhere near Samarkand since the outbreak of the war. Nor had any of the Australians, although they made repeated requests.

I have no idea what the explanation might be.

Nor were these "Englishmen" the only foreigners who had come to Samarkand. The city and region had received many Poles after the 1939 partition. Many of the Polish men had since joined the Polish Army of General Berling. But a good many men and many more women and children were still there and at Tashkent. There was a branch of the Union of Polish Patriots in Samarkand, and the Poles had collected money to outfit a tank column which was named for Kosciusko.

After Stalingrad, the officials told us, thousands of German prisoners had been sent to Samarkand and the surrounding country to recuperate. They were in bad physical shape, and were allowed to do light work in the vineyards and orchards before being sent east to Siberia.

At this point any feeling we had had that we were modern Marco Polos in Central Asia began to vanish.

Somewhat shyly we asked if there had been any other foreign callers at Samarkand recently.

Yes, indeed, they said. There had been a party of five or six foreigners—a commission of Chinese and Hindu experts in Oriental architecture who had come to give advice on the reconstruction work now in progress. Outside of this commission there had been no others.

And, we asked, doggedly, none of these visitors had been journalists, had they?

No, said the mayor, a bit uncertainly, he didn't think so, unless, of course, some of those British might have been. At that point we called it quits. We were afraid we would find out that Samarkand had been host to the world press congress only last year.

We had no time to spare when we finally pulled away from the municipal datcha to get back to our train, and I was frankly hoping that we might miss it and be forced to spend another day in Samarkand. There seemed to be some reason for hope, because so far we had not had the breakdown which is traditional for all busses in Russia. Bouncing out of Samarkand down a narrow street we met our first obstacle. It was a caravan—a cartoonist's delight of a caravan. Two little Uzbek lads, neither of them looking a day over nine years old, were astride two little burros leading eight of the most moth-eaten old camels you ever saw—ugly, bad-tempered, yellow-teethed beasts, heavily laden with jute cases filled with white powder, possibly potash. The camels filled the road from wall to wall. So, for that matter, did the bus. We jolted to a stop, but the caravan halted more slowly, and we suddenly seemed to be in a forest of angry camels. Our driver shouted at the donkey boys. The donkey boys shouted back. My Uzbek vocabulary then comprised

one word—which I have managed to forget—but no linguist was needed to follow the exchange. The impasse continued for several minutes before our angry driver slowly backed the bus up to a slightly wider spot where the donkey boys were able to lead their camels past, one by one.

Now we resumed our journey with a rush to make up for lost time. We got out of the city and into the open countryside, going down grade, when suddenly the bus coughed and the motor died. We coasted along to a halt. I had to chuckle while the driver fussed with his starter. It did no good. The engine had simply conked out.

In this crisis our friends from the NKVD came to the rescue. They were driving ahead of us in a small Zis sedan and did not notice that we had halted for some minutes. Then they came wheeling up in a cloud of dust and quickly decided to ferry us up to the station in relays of three at a time. Three of us piled into the rear seat, while two NKVD youngsters and their driver sat in front. One of these boys was a serious looking lad, and I had noticed that all day long he had carried under his arm a parcel wrapped in newspaper, about the size of a school lunch—which was what I had taken it for. When I slipped into the car I noticed his parcel in the rear seat and picked it up. The moment I lifted it I smiled, for his "school lunch" was a .32 caliber automatic which he had faithfully lugged around to protect us foreigners who were his charge. I balanced the gun on my knee for a while to see if he would miss it, and when he did not, I tapped him on the shoulder and handed over the package. "*Puzhalista!*" the youngster said, blushing beet red.

The other NKVD youth was even younger than his comrade, a stocky kid with round, nut-brown face and the liquid brown eyes of a typical Georgian. Several times I had noticed him grin and show his white teeth when one of us made a wisecrack in English. When we got to the station,

I teased him a bit. We had gone into the musty little office of the station master, decorated with a faded picture of Kaganovitch, a picture of Lenin, a dusty rubber plant, a faded calendar—but no picture of Stalin. It was the only office I ever saw in Russia where there was no picture of Stalin. We were sitting on an old black leather settee from which the springs were bulging, and the station master had brought us a carafe of water and some cold soda pop. The youngster was sitting next to me and I noticed he was wearing a beautiful Georgian belt of leather into which had been worked silver ornaments, much like a Western cowboy belt.

I admired the belt and asked him if it came from Georgia. Yes, he said, Georgia was his home. When had he come from there? Only in 1942. Had he come alone? No, he came with his father. "*Interesna*," I said, and how long had he studied *Angliski*? Only his four years in high school, he replied, blushing almost immediately as he realized he had given away his secret. Still teasing him, I switched from my scanty Russian to English. Quickly he insisted that he did not understand what I was saying. English, I said, was a very difficult language. How had he happened to come to Tashkent? His father had been transferred there. What did his father do? He was chief of the Tashkent garrison. Ummmm, I said, and how long have you worked for the NKVD? He blushed furiously and said he did not understand what I was talking about; so I gave up. It was not a very fair sport to bait so youthful a member of the security service.

Despite our great rush the train was in no hurry to leave. We postponed boarding our car until the last possible moment, because we knew it would be like an oven. Finally we climbed up, followed by our Samarkand hosts who wanted to drink a farewell glass with us. The National Hotel waiter had thoughtfully dispersed the remainder of

the wine and vodka in each compartment, so we filled our glasses while one of the Samarkand officials made a warm and touching toast of friendship. It was a long and flowery toast but just as we raised our glasses for a *do adna* the train started to move. My last sight of Samarkand was of the officials hopping one after another from the moving train and of the startled expression on the face of an Uzbek shepherd who was herding his sheep up along the right of way when the pongee-suited men spun out, one after the other, from our car.

I was too tired to sit up long. I watched at the window until it was deep dusk and we had lumbered back across the railroad bridge and started down into the desert again. The light in my compartment could not be turned off. I undressed and sat on the edge of the bed. "Tonight," I thought, "there will be no trouble with bedbugs. An alligator can bite off my leg and I will not notice it." Gradually the motion of the train emptied the compartment of the hot fetid air and it grew cooler. I lay back in my bunk and lighted a cigarette . . . Samarkand, the golden, was nothing but dust. True, there were some interesting relics . . . Tamerlane's tomb, the Street of Mausoleums, the observatory of Ulug Bek . . . tourist sights . . . as interesting and as dead as the pyramids of Egypt or the great wall of China . . . just as interesting and equally lacking in significance. But there was another thing in Samarkand . . . something that was like a pebble cast in a great pool, a great pool which is Asia. . . . The Kir Sadik . . . the Kir Sadik was a symbol of something which might well cast a spell which would put that of Tamerlane in the shade.

The Apricot of the Blind Peasant

I

In the late summer of 1944 I got up early one morning and boarded an A.T.C. plane at Tehran, en route to Abadan on the Persian Gulf. It was a hot, breathless morning, and I was anxious to leave Persia behind. As I sat in my bucket seat, I jotted down my departure time and added this note in my log:

"If ever write book, include chapter on scum of the earth."

I remember very clearly what I had in mind. I was thinking of what I had seen in Persia, coming into Russia and coming out again.

There was the evening when I dined at the Park Hotel, the finest in Tehran. It was a luxury setting, with tables on an open terrace under the star-studded Oriental sky and a good orchestra which appropriately had been playing at the Athene Palace in Bucharest when the war broke out. A rather adolescent American intelligence officer had invited me to dine with him, and he spent the time pointing out the men in dinner jackets and the women in evening gowns—the only evening gowns I had seen in Europe except for Lisbon and Cairo. There were even three of four men in tails.

One long table was reserved, and the guests did not arrive until nearly 11 o'clock. It was a coming-out party for a young French girl, a pretty dark-haired youngster with a creamy complexion and a candy-stripe taffeta evening gown, very smart, very low cut. She looked like a cover from *Mademoiselle*. There were a dozen guests, all very smart in

evening dress, all drinking champagne. The girl's father, a distinguished, gray-haired man, very trim in dinner jacket, was the host. He was, I was told, a "prominent business man." He had come to Tehran not many months before—by way of Paris (until late 1941), Vichy (until summer, 1942), Algiers (until late 1942) and Cairo (just a pause en route). The dates told his history, and I could not help noticing that the intervals between jumps were getting shorter and shorter. I wondered when the next jump might be, and I wondered even more where he could go. Seldom have I had such a feeling of sitting down on a cardboard stage amid cardboard company as I had that evening. Our troops were more than two months into France and at grips with the Wehrmacht, and I had just come from Russia where the blood fight was three years old. I looked around the room. The lights were low and the music was soft. At the next table the party drank its champagne, and the gentlemen bowed from the waist when they escorted the ladies to the tiny dance parquet. There were hardly any uniforms in sight except for a few Graustarkian Persians, and sitting there in my army field jacket I felt like an intruder.

I had a good dinner that night, almost as good as I could have had at the American mess at Camp Amirabad. The soup was thinner and the chicken tougher, but the service was excellent. There was a rare treat, too—ice water. It was the first ice water I had seen in a good many months, and I found myself starting to reach for it half a dozen times. For dessert the menu gave me a choice of ice cream, watermelon or Persian melon—something quite out of the world. I noticed at the tables around the room a dozen well-groomed men and sleek women spooning their ice cream and wolfing the melons. With a sigh I steeled myself and ordered demitasse—just demitasse and nothing more. Despite temptation the conversation I had with the American mess ser-

geant at Amirabad had been too vividly convincing. Ice cream, he said, was banned to the American forces—cholera. Melons, too. It seemed that you could take a hypodermic needle and inject a couple of quarts of water from the irrigation ditch into a melon and sell it for several pounds overweight. The hypo left no trace, except possibly for a touch of typhoid or diphtheria or dysentery.

“Include chapter on scum of the earth . . .”

There was another thing I was thinking of when I wrote that note. I had in mind a Persian youngster I saw on a station platform when I was going into Iran on my way to Russia. He and two pals were begging baksheesh from the GI's who crammed the train coming north from Ahwaz. First, they offered us pistachio nuts, green and unshelled. The GI's teased them and said they only liked hazelnuts. So the youngsters scurried around and came up with hazelnuts. Still, the GI's complained. Sure, they liked hazelnuts—but how about a dance?

The youngsters started to cavort in a kind of a jig. The GI's leaned out the train windows, brandishing rial notes, fresh purple rials, flown in only last week from New York where some American banknote company had printed them.

The eyes of the kids grew glazed from looking at the purple rials. Their dance became more frenzied, and one of them started to sing in a croaked, hoarse voice. The G.I.'s gave him a splitting raspberry. The kids had never heard the Bronx cheer before, but they recognized the bird when they heard it and danced more frantically than ever. The noise from the G.I.'s continued. Finally, near desperation, they started to gibber in Persian and pointed at one of the performers. We could understand nothing of what they were saying, but it was obvious that they were offering an attraction extraordinary. The G.I.'s were pleased and shouted encouragement. The Persians exhorted their com-

panion, a tousle-haired, sallow youngster who looked about nine years old but probably was fifteen. He was embarrassed, but finally he yielded. The kids were dressed in Arab style in loose dirty gowns that flowed straight from shoulder to ankle. The G.I. conductors were stalking up and down the platform, calling for everyone to board the train, before the Persian lad finally gave in. He went into a frenzy of what could only be called Persian jitterbugging, then he raised his tawdry skirts in the pay-off attraction. Suffering from yaws or some other Oriental disease, the youngster had enlarged testicles which were as big as boxing gloves. I looked at the G.I.'s. They were bright youngsters from a dozen American towns. They had waved their rial notes in the same spirit they would have shouted to a football team or to a waiter in a New York night club—just for fun. Now, they crumpled the purple bills and tossed them hurriedly to the platform, clambering on the train without looking at the Iranian youngsters scrambling in the dust for the money.

"Look," a G.I. engineer said to me fiercely, as the train slowly moved from the platform, "did you see that poor, stinking wog?"

"Yes," I told him, "that was a hell of a note."

"You know," he said, "I've been here for six months. I was one of the pioneers; but I can't get over that kind of thing. Doesn't it make you want to puke?"

"It does that," I said.

"You know," he said, reflectively, "these wogs get the dirty end of the stick. Like that kid. They've got three strikes on them before they start. Now, me, I wouldn't have anything to do with a wog on the end of a ten-foot pole. They don't know our language. But somebody has kicked them around too much, and something ought to be done. My idea is, let the Russians take care of them. Have you ever met the Russians?"

At that time the only Russians I had seen were some truckloads of tough-looking Russian pilots at Abadan who were ferrying Airacobras and A-20's and DC-3's up the supply line.

"No," I said, "I haven't met the Russians."

"Well," said my T-5 friend, "you will. My idea is to give the god-damn' country to the Russians."

I found, later on, that T-5 had lots of company in his thesis. There were many, many officers in the Persian Gulf Command who felt just that way—railroad engineers from Cincinnati and truckers from Tulsa and dispatchers from Buffalo, all the transport specialists who had been put into uniform and given just one job to do—move the stuff to Russia. They were not really Army men and they certainly were not political analysts. They were just expert Americans who knew how to move stuff from one place to another and who had been sent to Persia to do a job—the job of moving our supplies to Russia.

The Americans figured it out like this Persia was a land of squalor, poverty, corruption and disease beyond imagination. What little wealth there was outside of the British and American owned oil was concentrated in the hands of possibly 3,000 people. The rest of the 16,000,000 Persians starved almost every year and died of tuberculosis, syphilis, cholera, typhus or any other serious disease you could name. There were three armies in Persia—the American, the Russian and the British—but even with three foreign armies guarding the supply line the whole eastern half of the nation was in open revolt.

A favorite story with the Americans was the story of the Persian who had heard that Iran had joined the war on the Allied side.

"That is very good news," he said.

"Why do you think that?" he was asked

"Because now that we are in the war I will be called up in the Army."

"You mean that you want to join the Army?"

"But, of course."

"Why? The pay is very, very small."

"Yes, but I will get a rifle."

"What of that?"

"I can desert and sell the rifle."

That story probably is apocryphal, but at the time I was in Persia the Government had stopped sending troops out to put down the revolt that was raging among the Lurs and Bakhtiari tribesmen in the East. They had stopped sending troops because as rapidly as they reached the eastern plains they either joined the rebels or sold their rifles. The rebels, poorly armed at the start, were now so well equipped that the Government was afraid to send in more troops in fear they might advance on Tehran.

Reasoning from these conditions, the Americans agreed that, technically, the United States could pull Persia out of the morass. But they wanted no part of the job. All they wanted was to get out of Persia as soon as possible. The British, they thought, would never do anything to change the setup because they were there, fundamentally, to guard the oil and the approaches to the Indian frontier. Those Americans who had come into Persia from India thought the British would never do anything to improve the life of the Persian natives.

"The Russians," a thoughtful American officer told me, "know how to get along with these people. Their troops mix with the natives, and there are no barriers between them. We discourage fraternization, because of the danger of disease, but actually it makes little difference because there is no common meeting ground between our G.I.'s and the Persians."

"But," I said, "there must be plenty of difference between the Russians and the Persians—they do not have the same way of life."

"Yes," he replied, "but the difference is not too great to bridge. The Russians are used to what we would consider poor living conditions—no running water, a meal of bread and sausage, a straw pallet. In the north, in the Russian zone, you will find Red Army troops billeted in Persian towns and associating with the townsfolk. Our troops are all carefully isolated in camps—outside the towns—and a good thing, too. When there seems to be trouble brewing in Tehran they wear their sidearms to protect themselves against native attacks."

"Don't the Russians have any trouble with the Persians," I asked.

"Probably," the officer said, "but they wear their sidearms all the time. And there is another thing. The Russians give concerts for the natives and put on dances and entertainments. They feed them when they are hungry—during the famine last year it was wheat from Russia which saved the day. Probably it was lend-lease grain, but what counted was that the Russians brought it in while we tried to persuade the Persian Government to do something about the crisis."

"But what happens when Russian meets Persian?"

"Well," he said, "the Red Army men live in Persian huts. They eat in native cafés, and they drink in native bars. Those places are off-limits to our troops. There is a rule that our men may not drink *arak*. The Russians mix, we don't."

None of the Americans I met in Iran had ever been in Red Asia. Few of them had ever been in Russia. When they said, "Give Iran to the Russians," they were just expressing their shock at local conditions and their belief that only the Russians could make any improvement.

When I went to Soviet Asia, I thought of this American

judgment time and again. Here was something to repeat and remember. Russia stood in both Europe and Asia, and while in the West it was natural and fair to compare conditions with those in other European countries, in the East the condition was completely reversed. It was not difficult to show that in western Russia living standards, for perfectly understandable reasons, often lagged behind those of Europe. In fact, this lag has been the basis of many invidious comparisons, the sort the Russians bitterly resent, such as the contrast, for example, of living conditions between Helsinki and Moscow.

In the East this situation is completely reversed. Red Asia is a vast region which abuts Iran, Afghanistan, India, Tibet and China, and at all points along that border the contrast is striking. This is true on any basis on which comparison may be made. For example, in Bangalore, India, there is a large aircraft factory. This plant was erected after the start of the war by an American promoter backed by Indian capital. It was designed to manufacture trainer planes and, after considerable expense, it did actually produce one pilot model—but not more, I believe. Then it was agreed that the operation was not economic, and the plant was converted into a repair and modifications center.

This was the only plane factory in India, and it never made planes commercially. Its contribution as a repair shop was relatively modest. In India, a nation of 400,000,000 people, ten times the size of England, no Spitfires were turned out, no Hurricanes, no Lancasters, not even any Wellingtons or Wembleys. Doubtless excellent reasons can and will be cited for this and it certainly is true that India did contribute both economically and in manpower to the British war effort.

But the fact remains that Red Asia never made a single airplane before June 22, 1941, but in the months that fol-

lowed it set up a whole aviation industry. Tashkent is the metropolis of Red Asia. It lies about three hundred miles north of India, and I suppose that twenty-five years ago it was a typical colonial country. There probably was no more and no less oppression of the Uzbek natives by the Czarist rulers than there is of the Hindus by the British Raj.

Today in Tashkent there is an airplane factory which was moved bodily from Moscow in November and December of 1941. It turns out Douglas DC-3 transport planes, under license, and only an expert could distinguish those planes from planes built at Santa Monica. The "workmen" (most of them are teen-age boys, or women) include a high proportion of natives, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadzhiks. If you mixed them up with an equal number of Indians, you could not tell them apart.

The plant is efficient. True, it does not have as good a physical layout as the Hindustani Aircraft works in Bangalore, but it is housed in some old airplane hangars that do very well. Sources of raw materials are distant, and the assembly line during the war had to halt sometimes for lack of aluminum; but five or six DC-3's rolled off that line each day during the war. Nor is the Douglas plant the only one in Central Asia. Airplane production has become one of the region's leading industries. Yet India, with vastly greater resources of raw materials and labor, made no major contribution to British air power.

By coincidence the cities of Tehran and Alma-Ata lie on high plateaus up against snowclad glacial mountain ranges. Each is a high-altitude city, above 4,000 feet, and, coming in by plane, it might at first be difficult to distinguish one from the other. But note this great difference. Tehran stands on a gray and yellow desert, dotted at irregular intervals by orchards and irrigated fields. There is no pattern. Even inside Tehran there are great sections which

look like the desert—dry, dusty wastes in which the poplars live in mud huts which blister the landscape.

Coming into Alma-Ata, the lush green valley is a joy to the eyes and every inch lies under cultivation—apple, cherry and peach orchards, vineyards, melon patches, fields of sugar cane and wheat. Wherever you look the land is green; and after a thousand miles of desert it looks even greener.

Like Tehran, Alma-Ata draws water from open gutters coursing along the streets; but the water, sluicing down from glacial streams as at Tehran, is pure. It is fed from great conduits into ditches and in and out of fields, into orchards and through the walled courtyards. It feeds into swimming pools, as well. But in Alma-Ata, the water is sweet and is used only to nourish the fields and to provide drink for the people. In Tehran it is polluted every fifty yards.

Alma-Ata, with a population of probably 400,000, is only half as big as Tehran but it is a modern, progressive city with handsome schools, paved streets, well-housed industries and mile after mile of pleasant homes. It looks like the kind of town where you would like to bring up children.

Tehran has a handsome racecourse, but no horses to race on it. It has a beautiful Opera House, but no opera company. It has an excellent water supply, but no pipes and no sewers. It has fine cement pavements for half a dozen streets, but only a handful of autos and trucks. It has beautiful palaces, but no plumbing. It has fine college buildings, but no faculty. It has an Army whose pay is about five mills a day. It has the finest printing plant in the East—an air-conditioned, tile-floored, insect-proof building equipped with a beautiful hospital and surrounded by one of the most lovely Oriental gardens I have ever seen. But when the Germans who built and operated the plant decamped in 1941 no one in all Persia knew how to run the presses or operate the photoengraving machinery.

Tehran is old but Alma-Ata is young. It really dates from 1929, when the "Turk-Sib" railroad got there. The town goes back, even as a desert trading center, only some ninety years—about as far back as Denver, Colorado. Twice it has been destroyed, once by fire, and in 1930 by flood. The flood is easy to understand, because the city lies in the Alatau mountain foothills; but it will not happen again. Dams have been built in the mountains to hold back the glacial waters and harness their power.

Alma-Ata, like Tehran, has an opera house; but with a company to sing in it. It has also a ballet theater, a dramatic theater, a symphony orchestra, a choreographic school, a motion picture studio, and it presents plays and operas in both the Russian and Kazakh languages. The Kazakh language, incidentally, was reduced to written form only under the Soviet. Before the Revolution illiteracy in Alma-Ata and Kazakhstan was at least 93 percent, partly because there was no written native language and more because of deliberate government policy.

Today in Persia literacy is about where it was in Czarist Kazakhstan. But Kazakhstan has brought it down to five percent. There are fourteen institutions of higher learning in Alma-Ata, with some 13,000 students, and in the Republic there are twenty colleges. There is a branch of the Academy of Science, and there are twenty-five agricultural scientific institutes and experimental stations.

Tehran and Alma-Ata live in two different worlds. One is the modern, progressive world which we know, and the other is the crumbling remains of an ancient civilization untouched even by the possibly benign influence of great-power colonial policy. Nor is it necessary to limit the contrast to Persia. Alma-Ata lies only an hour and a half by air from Sinkiang, theoretically the westernmost province of China but, in fact, a shadowy border country whose status

is often in the balance. The residents of Kazakhstan and Sinkiang are of the same Turkoman-Mongol stock. The Turkoman tribes wandered into the region in the restless twelfth and thirteenth centuries, leaving their homes around the Caspian Sea in search of greater freedom. Although technically they were under Chinese rule for many centuries and although their culture is strongly Chinese, there was never much central authority in these remote mountains and deserts until the coming of the Soviet.

It is easy for inhabitants of Sinkiang to contrast the Soviet and the Chinese regimes. Their nomadic life often takes them across the ill-defined frontier, and they have actually lived under Soviet rule for several years. They know that the Russians treat them as equals and that the Chinese treat them as inferiors, that under the Russians economic conditions improve and under the Chinese the tribute to the tax collector—whether of a local war lord or the central government—goes up and up with nothing given in return. There is not much more that they need to know.

II

There is a very simple difference between Red Asia and the many other worlds which constitute the rest of Asia. It is symbolized by the *Kur Sadık*. For many years, just how many is not important in a continent where centuries pass like the falling leaves, the *Kur Sadık* had grown in the orchard of a peasant farm in central Asia. For miles around the fruit of this orchard was famous, but miles, like years, mean little in this land of thousands of leagues.

The *Kur Sadık* was an apricot of fantastic taste. If you ate it, as I did at Samarkand, you would remember the fruit for the rest of your life. It was an experience. Thus it had been for as long as those with the longest memory could remember. Thus it would have been into the road of the

future, but for one thing—Soviet planners and Soviet scientists.

These Soviet planners and scientists did not know, when they came to Central Asia, that they would find a fabulous apricot in the orchard of a blind peasant; but they had a plan for finding this fruit and a thousand other fruits and valuable plants. They had a plan, too, for putting those fruits and plants to work—for putting the whole of Red Asia to work. As Mayor Danierov, a former high school mathematics teacher who is now the mayor of Samarkand, put it: "Before the Revolution this country was just a colony and a source of raw materials." He might have added that for ignorance, disease, superstition and backwardness the region could hardly be matched.

Today, its agricultural production has been boosted 20 times or more. Today, much of what it produces is processed right on the spot. And, although still primarily agricultural, the industrial expansion of Red Asia has been proportionally greater than that of any other part of the Soviet.

The secret of the transformation can be told in one word—water.

This Asiatic interior contains some of the world's richest land and also some of the most arid. What made it bloom in ancient times was intelligent water use. In the centuries after the collapse of the great Asiatic dynasties the secret of conserving water was lost, and the primitive dam-and-canal system which made the country lush and fertile crumbled away, letting the whole region sink back into desert.

The Soviet program for meeting this situation is one with which any American is familiar—a combination TVA and "dust bowl" procedure. This has turned the millions of acres of desert into fertile lands, resembling the Platte river project in Nebraska or the Central valley in California.

Two of the key men in this program were Premier Ysu-

pov of Uzbekistan, a native who is regarded as one of the shrewdest and ablest men in Soviet Asia, and his assistant, Vice-Commissar Rodon M. Glukhov, a hulking, conscientious man of thirty-eight who has lived thirty-six of his years in Central Asia, the last five as vice-commissar of Uzbekistan and four years before that as vice-commissar of Tadjikistan.

Glukhov was our host at Tashkent on the trip with Eric Johnston. He told us something of this tremendous undertaking. Nearly two billion gold rubles, about \$400,000,000, have been expended in Uzbekistan alone on water conversion and irrigation projects.

The chief source of water in this area is the winding Sir Darya (Gray River) which is formed by the confluence of the Kara Darya (Black River) and the Akh Darya (White River) and which empties into the Aral Sea. The first great irrigation project was the Ferghan Canal, a 220-mile project running through Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, almost half of which was built under Glukhov's supervision. This canal is nearly sixty feet wide and more than thirty-six feet deep, and it involved no less than four hundred and fifty construction projects, large and small, requiring the use of concrete and steel. It crosses a number of other canals, either overhead or underground. Perhaps the most interesting feature was the way in which the construction job was done. "It was a community job," Glukhov explained, "there were 220,000 people working on it. They left their homes and farms, and came to the big camps which had been set up along the route. Everyone worked. Everyone had a share in it."

The job was done with a great propaganda ballyhoo, which was probably almost as important as the actual construction. The objective was to make everyone in the region feel that he had a share in the huge undertaking. In the massive force there were 160,000 farmers, including 10,000 women. There were also 18,000 Communist youths, 1,070

party members, and 2,740 "agitprops"—propaganda morale workers.

Work started at dawn on August 1, 1939. Having seen that desert, I can imagine what it was like under a burning Asiatic August sun; but forty-five days later the canal had been completed and something more than 1,100,000 more acres of rich soil, many of them in the so-called Starvation Steppes, had been placed under irrigation. "You know," said Glukhov, "we don't call it the Starvation Steppes any more. It has been broken down into individual regions, and each of them has its own name."

He explained that the first effort to tame the steppes was made more than thirty years ago when the Czarist regime completed the Romanov Canal. This project also draws on the Sir Darya for water and was designed to provide more land for cotton, cotton being almost the only agricultural interest of the Imperial Government in Central Asia. The Romanov Canal, however, has been reconstructed under the Soviet and where it once delivered twenty cubic yards of water per minute it now delivers six times that amount and some 2,200,000 acres of the starved land have been irrigated, plowed and cultivated. Glukhov spoke of this work with the same almost mystical enthusiasm with which the late Senator Norris talked of TVA. It was clear that his life was dedicated to the land, to getting water on it and to making it bear fruit and bread. "Now," he said, "we are building another project—the Farkhad. It will be the third largest hydroelectric development in the Soviet Union. It will solve two problems—hydroelectric and irrigation."

This new project involved the damming of the Sir Darya to change its course in order to irrigate another 1,000,000-odd acres of the Starvation Steppes, virgin soil which never in history had been broken by the plow. At this time the canals stood virtually completed, but the four turbines for

the power plant had not been installed. They had been ordered from America, but when they might arrive there was no telling.

Everywhere we went in Central Asia the talk, sooner or later, got back to the one vital subject—water.

Mayor Danierov, with a shy smile, spoke of Samarkand's provincial problem. They had practically finished three canals—the ditches were dug and the concrete had been poured. The three projects, Tagigulin, Khishrau, and Dragom, were designed to irrigate some 170,000 acres of fine desert and to provide, incidentally, 35,000 kw. of power, to help the small local industries.

"There is a traditional friendship between Leningrad and Samarkand," said the mayor. "Did you know that Samarkand is often called 'the Leningrad of Asia'? Well, because of this friendship between our cities we were depending upon Leningrad to furnish us the turbines which we need for our dams. But now, because of the war, Leningrad can not provide them. So, we were wondering whether we could get them from America?"

We said we did not know, but we hoped they could.

The by-product of the water for irrigation is power. How this is integrated with agriculture and industry on the typical pattern of the TVA I saw at the Cherchik Electrochemical plant, named for Stalin, which is about twenty-five miles outside Tashkent, located in a flat, sweltering mountain river bed. Back in the mountains the glacial Cherchik river has been dammed. The water goes into irrigation canals, but first it powers a 100,000-kw. hydroelectric station. The power is fed to the electrochemical plant, which was designed as the heart of the whole Uzbek economic complex.

This plant is a nitrogen fixation plant. Built just before the war, it has a capacity of 600,000 tons per year. It was designed as the main source of fertilizer for Uzbekistan.

With the combination of irrigation and fertilization, huge crop yields are possible. The cotton yield per acre, for example, is boosted to something like two and a half times the American average. This, the Soviet agricultural experts hastily will explain, is not actually a fair comparison. Their yields, they say, should be compared to ours in the similar irrigated-fertilized areas of Arizona, New Mexico and California. The war, of course, forced the Russians to divert the bulk of the nitrates into munitions production.

Although I saw the Cherkik plant, being an expert on neither power or nitrates I am not, perhaps, a good witness. But I can say that it was an impressive layout. It sprawled over probably a mile square of rubbly land which had once been river-bottom. From its high stacks poured out acid smoke—yellow and green and black and orange. There were few people about, because the plant was largely automatic, but they told us that the labor force was ninety percent women where, before the war, it had been ninety percent male. Only fifteen or twenty percent of the labor force were Uzbeks, the rest Russians, but the Uzbeks were being trained to take over the operation and the directors said that in, say, ten years, they would probably be running it on their own.

As we wandered through the works, in and out of ammonia plants, compression chambers, generator housings and turbine establishments, the chief engineer, Anatoly Milovanov, casually said to me: "That tank was evacuated here."

I took a look. It was a huge steel tank, as high as a four-story building.

"How's that?" I asked.

"That big nitrogen tank," he repeated, "came from the plant at Stalingorsk, near Moscow. It was made by the American Nitrogen Corporation. When the Germans got

near Moscow it was taken apart and shipped here. We have the whole plant, set up on our grounds."

The Soviet "TVA" has paid dividends both to the state as a whole and to the people of Red Asia. For example, when the beet sugar lands of the Ukraine were lost to the Germans Red Asia stepped into the breach. More than 100,000 acres of sugar beets were planted in Uzbekistan alone, including 35,000 acres raised for seed to put the Ukraine back into production. The yield was good, too, averaging 22,000 pounds per acre, only about one-sixth below that of the established Ukraine fields. But in some places with heavy irrigation and fertilization production went up to 105,000 pounds per acre, and it is hoped with peacetime conditions to stabilize production at about 35,000 to 40,000 pounds.

This production was not achieved without sacrifice. Much cotton and fruit acreage was diverted to the emergency beet program. Uzbekistan normally produces 63 percent of Russia's cotton. Its 1944 production of 400,000 tons of ginned cotton was off one-third from the 1941 figure, and the yield per acre, which had run at about 6,160 pounds (without seed), dropped substantially. The same thing happened to the grape crop. There were other difficulties, too. In Samarkand, for example, practically all trucks were collected and sent to the front. This left the province with nothing but primitive carts to bring the cotton crop to the gins. Finally, when the Persian supply line got to working, they received 82 Studebakers and Dodges, and their troubles were over.

What this development has meant to the people of Central Asia is easy to record in terms of statistics—156 elementary and high schools in Tashkent, for example, compared with one gymnasium in the Czarist days, with only six Uzbeks among its 250 students. In Samarkand province there are now eleven theaters, where before the Revolution

there were none. In Tashkent the first European opera was presented only fifteen years ago—yet I saw there an Uzbek opera fashioned around the life of Ulug Bek with Uzbek music, Uzbek ballet and many Uzbek performers. In Kazakhstan I saw the first native opera, "The Silken Girl." I thought of the old Shah of Persia who had hoped to make Tehran "the Paris of the East," and of his vain, empty opera house surrounded by a legion of starving beggars.

Naturally these vast changes in what had been a backward, primitive land have not been without cost. It is reasonable to suppose that there have been difficulties at times with some of the nomad tribesmen. But it is also reasonable to believe that the Soviet approach, a combination of education, propaganda, and gentle but firm suasion, has minimized such friction.

Throughout Red Asia you will find Russian officials working shoulder to shoulder with local natives. If the mayor is a Tadjik, his assistant usually is a Russian; and visa versa. But usually it is the native who holds the top post, and the Russian who is No. 2. All Russians must learn the language of the native republic, just as the natives must learn Russian. The educational and propaganda programs are directed at increasing native participation and control of their affairs as rapidly as sufficient native civil servants can be trained. The industrialization program, immeasurably expanded by the war and evacuation of plants, similarly calls for ever increased numbers of Uzbeks, Kazakhs, etc., to be drawn from mountain villages and deserts into the factories of the cities.

There is another factor in the industrialization of Red Asia which should be mentioned but which cannot be measured. This is the role of the industrial department of the NKVD, which has erected and operates some major installations in this region as, indeed, it does in many other areas

The most notable of these is the great Karaganda coal complex in Kazakhstan, now one of the leading Soviet coal sources, its production a hundred times larger than in the Czarist era. The labor force of such projects is drawn from the ranks of criminal offenders. German prisoners are probably employed on such undertakings, too. And it probably would be equally reasonable to presume that some of the displaced population groups, such as the Volga Germans, are working at Karaganda and similar projects.

One morning in Tashkent several of us went to look at the old native city. We were accompanied by our usual escort of NKVD plainclothes men, but they had no interest in native sights and when we wandered back into the narrow, twisting alleys they parked their car in bored resignation and left us strictly to ourselves.

At first glance the mud-walled streets looked like those of Tehran or any other Oriental city, but there was a difference—they were cleaner, and the people were clean. The children were healthy. Dick Lauterbach had color film in his camera, and wanted to get some pictures. That quickly attracted a procession of youngsters and while Dick was photographing them, playing at mud pies around an irrigation pool, an old Uzbek wandered up. He was bronzed and grizzled and as delighted as the children at the picture taking. When he learned that we were *Amerikanski*, he insisted on leading us to his house for *chi*.

"*Puzhalista, puzhalista*," he said with repeated half-bows. We walked down the narrow alley with him, through a slit of a gate, and entered a lovely walled garden. There was a small pool of water and a rippling stream that flowed into his garden and then under the wall into his neighbor's yard. Everywhere there were rose bushes and tall sunflowers and petunias and bachelor's buttons. There were peach trees and apple trees. It was like a little bit of heaven and we could

see, once inside the walls, that his neighbors' gardens were equally lovely.

We went back to his house. One room was open to the garden. There was another beyond that, and two on the second story. The roof was flat, like those of all the houses, and on the rooftops there were bedclothes. At night it was cooler on the rooftops, and that was where the people slept.

Inside his house it was cool and dark. There were low couches and heaps of Oriental rugs and a stone floor worn smooth. On the wall were two faded photographs of young Red Army men.

"My sons," he said proudly. "They are in the Red Army Before the Revolution that would have been impossible."

His wife was bustling around to get some tea for us, but we finally persuaded her that we would not have time for the samovar to heat. As we walked back out through his garden, he spoke with great simplicity of the honor it had been for him to have us come to his home.

"I am glad that you *Amerikanski* have seen me, an old Uzbek," he said. "Because you have not known what the Soviet Union has done. I am an old man. I lived under the Czars, and I remember those days well. Then I was nothing at all. Now, I am something. I am a man. It is good for you to see that."

We thought it was good, too.

That evening, very late and after a full day, some of us were drinking a glass of beer with Glukhov. He seemed depressed and worried. He was concerned about what we might write of this land to which he had devoted his life.

"All I ask," he said, "is that you make an honest report. That you try to understand what we have done here. We are not holding anything back. We want you to see everything, and we want to get every fact for you that will help you to make your report."

He apologized because he had been unable to get a certain bit of statistics which we had requested—the amount of farm produce raised by the workers of a Tashkent textile mill. He mentioned this, and said he had tried to get the figure for us but that he had not been able to.

“I am sorry,” he said. “I want you to know I have tried to get this figure.”

It was easy to see what was troubling him. He was afraid that we would not understand what the Soviet had accomplished for this land, that we would not realize the background of their achievements and that because perhaps things were not done exactly as they are done in Moscow or Washington we would feel that all this work had been a failure.

“It would not be possible,” I told him, “to write anything but a good report of your work here. It is wonderful, and we know very well what you have done. Even if we tried to write a bad report we could not do it.”

I told him of the old Uzbek we had met that morning.

“Just write the truth,” Glukhov said.

I promised I would; and, as I promised, I could not help wondering what would happen in those vast regions of Asia which shoulder against the Soviet as word of the achievements of Red Asia spreads further and further.

It seemed obvious for instance, that the Tudeh party in Persia would need only a gentle illustration or two to spur its enthusiasm for emulating in Iran the economic and cultural gains of Uzbekistan. And if you back up the illustrations with military occupation such as the Red Army has conducted in northern Iran since 1942; if you launch, as the Russians have done, a flattering program of cultivating the handful of Iranian intellectuals; if you place here and there in strategic towns a few trained Communist organizers (as the Russians have done)—the net result on such Persian

public opinion as exists can be added up as easily as two and two, and the result will not displease the Kremlin.

It seemed equally obvious that tradition, religion, sheer mass ignorance, and the most powerful armed establishment ever mobilized by the British Raj would slow the process of osmosis in India. But it was equally apparent that, unless some positive program of social improvement was introduced in India, time and more time was working on the side of the *Kur Sadik*.

And the same thing, it could be presumed, would hold true for China. Stalin could afford to be generous in his postwar settlements with Chiang Kai-shek. Time is cheap in Asia. But only Russia has harnessed it.

We Have Given Our Blood

I

Several months before I went to Russia I met Colonel (now Brigadier General) Elliott Cutler, chief surgeon of the European Theater of Operations, in Algiers. He was just back from Moscow and bubbling over with what he had seen. He had spent a month in the Soviet Union, devoting himself particularly to Russian care of the front line wounded. They had taken him up to the lines around Vyazma and let him see their whole organization, from the battlefield back to base hospitals.

I do not remember many specific things that Cutler said in the press room of the Agricole building in Algiers. But I remember his spirit—that of a youngster who has just had a very great experience. Since Cutler was no youngster—he was in his fifties and a full professor at Harvard—this impressed me.

Cutler particularly liked Russian front line nursing and thought it better than ours. As for the care of the wounded further back, he was not so sure. "The Russians are very clever," he said. "Let me tell you some of the things they do. Their stretcher bearers are women! Think what that means. It saves thousands of men for fighting—and they don't have any men to waste. They are serious about their war. Manpower means something to them. With us—we take men who are perfectly able to run a machine gun and make stretcher bearers out of them. They really show us up on that. They have high casualties among their front line nursing corps. So do we. But they lose women and we lose men—men who might just as well be fighting."

Nor was that all Cutler emphasized. Instead of stretchers, the Russians used a kind of land sledge. It was a litter with runners which could be pulled over dirt as well as snow (with a little more sweat). "The beauty of this is," said Cutler, "that one woman can evacuate one wounded man. A stretcher takes at least two men and in rough country, four. Furthermore, their wounded are not knocked around much more than ours. I call that economical warfare and we fight an expensive war."

Another thing impressed Colonel Cutler. When the wounded reached the front line dressing station, they found it manned, usually, entirely by women—nurses. They gave first aid. The job of the girls who pulled the wounded in on the stretchers was just to get them to the aid station. Our aid men gave care to the wounded right on the battlefield—plasma, morphine, sulpha. Our troops all carried sulpha packets when they went into combat and, often, morphine as well. Red Army men didn't Russians didn't have enough drugs to scatter them with a free hand

"Do you know anything about tents?" Cutler asked suddenly.

The correspondents knew something about pup tents, but not much. This was the sort of opening which Cutler had been waiting for.

"Our tents date back to the Spanish war," he said. "We use the same tents which Teddy Roosevelt used at San Juan."

This was a subject to which, I am sure, the correspondents had never given any thought.

"Our tents," said Cutler in great indignation, "have a center ridgepole. There are poles sticking up in the midst of our operating tables. They are clumsy. They are hot in summer and cold in winter."

We clucked encouragingly.

"It is a long time since the Spanish war," our Colonel said.

"Yes," I said. "You don't hear much about Richard Harding Davis around here."

"That's right," Cutler snapped. "You don't hear him quoted—but we still use his tents. Now, the Russians aren't as dumb as we are. Their tents are not new, either. The French invented them during the Crimean war. They don't have any center post, and there's a double air space which makes them cooler in summer and warm in winter, too."

"What sort of care do they give their wounded?" I asked him.

"It's wonderful," he said, smiling. "The first thing they do is give them a bath. That is wonderful. Maybe you don't know what it means. It isn't easy, for instance. You don't ordinarily have any hot water at a front line dressing station. The Russians do. The wounded come out of the line. They are dirty. They are lousy. They have been in combat for three weeks. They have fought in the mud. They stink. God, how they stink! Unless you have been there you don't know how bad they smell and how dirty they are. So, now, they come to the front line stations and they get a bath. An experienced washer, a man or woman who does nothing but give baths to the wounded, takes care of them. That is the first thing that happens. The soldier is ticketed for his wound. Then the bathers take him. They take off his clothes and wash off the grime. Sure—it takes time. It delays surgery. But when the soldier is washed and clean he feels wonderful. It makes no difference what his wound is. If he isn't actually dying in front of them he gets the bath first—then he goes to the surgery."

"How does their surgery compare with ours?" I asked.

"It is good," Dr. Cutler said. "It has its rough spots. Their doctors were turned out by mass production. But re-

member this—experience makes the surgeon. No surgeon in the world has had the practice of the Russian. Nowhere else have there been so many wounded. When the war is over, the Russians should have the best surgeons in the world.” He also pointed out that they were now graduating seven times as many physicians per year as we were

The Russian soldier, Cutler said, was screened again, after his bath, for brain injuries, chest injuries, or abdominal injuries or wounds in the extremities. There were separate medical teams waiting for each category of wound. Because of the quantity of Russian wounded it was possible to specialize like this.

“They did not have very good operative conditions,” he admitted. “Lots of their surgeons were short on equipment. But their operative losses were not bad. And I think the thing that did it was the baths. The clean, washed soldier was a much better operative risk.”

After his front line surgery, the Red Army man was sent further back to a hospital. Usually, these hospitals were closer to the fighting lines in Russia than were our hospitals.

“There was a very healthy atmosphere about the hospitals,” Cutler said. “There was no coddling. The job was to restore the fighting man to the lines as fast as possible. The Russian attitude was functional. They looked at the wounded from a military standpoint, and they gave first attention to the men who could be sent back to the fighting lines fastest.”

He felt that their care of the lightly wounded was superior to their care of the seriously wounded.

“The Russians are much smarter with the lightly wounded than we are,” he said. “The lightly wounded man never loses touch with the front. His hospital is far enough forward so that his commander can visit him. Almost every day some member of his outfit will come to see him and

tell him what is going on. He remains part of his outfit even while in the hospital. They don't have a lot of pin-up girls for their wounded. They don't have radios. You won't find any jig-saw puzzles in the Red Army hospitals. As soon as a man is well enough to sit up, they toss him his rifle. He spends his time taking it apart, oiling it and changing cartridge clips."

"Why do they do that?" someone asked.

"These men are going back into combat as soon as their wounds heal," Cutler said. "If you are in combat you cannot be too familiar with your weapon. The fraction of a second it takes you to put in a new clip may mean the difference between your life and your enemy's. The Red Army man never loses touch with his weapon. There is good psychology behind it, too. This fixes in the man's mind the fact that he is only out of the lines for a breathing spell. He gets no chance to develop rear-area psychoses."

Cutler was not an all-out enthusiast for Soviet medicine. He thought that, due to skimpy training, some of their doctors were only fair. "They are a little too radical in many ways," he said. "They try a good many short-cuts—just on the chance of getting results. Their research has suffered, due to the war. But in practical things—like giving the front line soldier a bath before operating, in grouping their types of casualties for treatment, in their treatment of the lightly wounded—in those things which seem so simple, they are ahead of us."

"What about V.D.?" someone asked. ("V.D." is Army for venereal disease.)

"Listen," said Cutler, scornfully. "The Russians are fighting a serious war. They don't have time to fuss about little things like V.D. and head colds."

Later, I talked to a British doctor who had gone to Russia with Cutler. He was a well-known Harley street specialist.

"Is there any lesson to be learned from Russia's wartime medicine?" I asked him.

"They are doing a very creditable job," he said. "Quite commendable."

II

Botkin hospital in Moscow is a show place. Not many correspondents or distinguished visitors missed it during the war.

Botkin is housed in some sixty buildings, ranging from big barracklike structures to small cottages. It was here that Lenin was taken after he had been shot by a young girl, while making a speech in 1918. And there is still a Lenin memorial room, with a faded photograph of the great revolutionist speaking, just before he was shot, and another taken as he lay in bed in a little green hospital room. There is also a doctor's chart, recording Lenin's temperature and pulse. His temperature ran up to 104, but he recovered and went on to make the Revolution.

The chief interest at Botkin these days, however, is Dr. Anatoly Pavlovich Frumkin. Frumkin is the creator of the plastic-surgery penis, which is not the most difficult surgical technique which the war has evolved but which is certainly one of the most interesting.

Colonel Cutler was the first person to tell me about Frumkin's technique. He was frankly admiring.

"The thing about it," he said, "is that it works."

He described his visit to the hospital. A young Russian woman had gone along as an interpreter.

"We did not know how she would react to all this," the Colonel said. "When we got to the surgical theater, I did not want to embarrass the young woman so I tried, tactfully, to slip in ahead so she would lag behind if she was shy. But it didn't work. She plopped down in a front row

seat. Frumkin led in his patients. He made them show just what he had done. The young lady followed all this with great interest."

It was a slushy winter day when I went out to Botkin hospital. I was greeted by the director, Dr. Boris Shimeliovich, and by Frumkin himself. We sat down on a black leather couch in his neat little office and talked about the work of the hospital. Shimeliovich explained that it was a general hospital with a dozen different departments. Before the war it had been devoted entirely to civilian cases, but now about two-thirds of the 2,500 beds were given over to the Red Army.

In Russia, he pointed out, there is no dividing line between civilian and military hospitals. All hospitals, of course, are state institutions, and when the war came the Red Army made use of civilian facilities. Here as everywhere in Russia civilians had gotten along on what was left over after the Red Army was taken care of. Since Botkin was one of the largest civilian hospitals in Moscow, it was obvious that civilians were struggling along with greatly reduced medical facilities. This had been pointed out by Cutler. "After all, the Russians only have so many medical facilities—so many hospital beds and so many doctors," he said. "By making a common pool of army and civilian needs they get the best possible use of their available resources." And, he added, there were plenty of places in the United States that might well follow this example.

I asked Shimeliovich, a reserved, clean-shaven, dark-haired man in his upper forties, what he thought of German doctors.

"They have nothing to teach us," he said curtly.

Frumkin interposed that he had met some of the German military surgeons captured at Stalingrad.

"They were very haughty," he said. "I tried to talk to them for a few minutes, and then walked away. I could not

control my temper, and I did not want to make an exhibition of myself. They are cold Prussianized beasts."

"What about their equipment?" I asked.

Shimeliovich and Frumkin snorted.

"Terrible!" said Shimeliovich. "Paper bandages, ersatz drugs, poor instruments Just rubbish. We don't even bother to salvage it!"

I jotted down a mental note of reservation. Only a couple of days before I had gone out to the Moscow Park of Rest and Culture to see the exhibition of captured German war materiel. There was a whole section devoted to German medical equipment, field medical kits, surgical instruments, portable X-ray laboratories, portable operating tables, anesthesia outfits which could be packed in a small traveling case, drug cabinets—filled with standard drugs and chemicals. It made an excellent layout.

"Have the Germans no medical equipment which is of any use to you?" I asked.

Shimeliovich sneered.

"The Germans are fascist beasts," he said "The German doctors are no better than the rest. They are all Nazis."

It was like asking a Georgian whether he thought Sherman was a good military strategist—only more so.

"They are not doctors," Frumkin interjected. "They are Nazis The program for exterminating Russian civilians was in the hands of the Nazi army doctors. They gave orders to kill the patients in the sanatoriums in the Caucasus They directed the drive to kill off the Russian people under Himmler's orders."

"How is their care of the wounded?" I asked.

"I have seen their orders, myself," said Frumkin "They do not limit their atrocities to Russians. They are the same with their own troops. If a German is wounded so badly that there is no chance of his going back into line, he gets

no attention. If he recovers, it is just by accident. With the lightly wounded it's different. They are looked after because they can go back into the fighting. But they think no more of letting their own severely wounded die than they do of putting Red Army men into gas chambers."

I could see that the atrocities the Nazi doctors had committed in Russia and the role they had played in the calculated Nazi policy of reducing Russia's population had made the doctors so bitter that, while they might gladly use German ether for an operation, they could not bring themselves to say to a foreigner a single kind word for anything of German medical origin. I did not blame them. Later on, the more I saw of what the Germans had done in Russia, the more I was able to understand the attitude of Shmeilovich and Frumkin.

Dr. Tatiana Pavlovna Belskaya, a competent, good-looking woman surgeon of about thirty-six, was my escort through the hospital. First, they handed me a nurse's white smock to put on over my coat. Because the smock was short and I am long, this costume produced a very curious effect. I looked something like an absent-minded barber who put on his overcoat to go to work and then slipped his barbering jacket on top.

I found the hospital clean, neat and well run. I have seen many hospitals in the United States and England, and I know good care and good management when I see it. Later I asked two American doctors, Dr. Hastings and Dr. Boris Shimkin, who had come in with Dr. Fleming to show the Russians how to make penicillin, what they thought of Botkin, and they agreed that it was a good hospital.

Many buildings were old and shabby on the outside. But inside the corridors glistened, the wards were spotless, the bed linens clean and the patients cheerful. More impressive than anything else were the patients. And most impressive

about the patients was their obvious and genuine eagerness to get back to combat.

This eagerness was the product of indoctrination. I have talked to American and British wounded in the hospitals. Most of them made no bones about it. They had had their war. They didn't expect to go back, and no one expected them to. But our lightly wounded in Italy were often eager to get back to their outfits. As in Russia, this was a product of the comradeship born from front line fighting. At Botkin I talked to a sailor who had fought in the siege of Sevastopol. He had lost a leg there more than a year ago. The stump had healed and he was waiting in the hospital for his artificial limb.

"It's a God-damn' outrage," he said. "I've been waiting two months for my leg. Why the hell don't they hurry up with it?"

The Sevastopol survivor got so excited making this speech that he almost bounced out of bed. Dr. Belskaya chuckled and patted the sailor on the shoulder. "Don't you worry," she answered, "we'll get that leg for you *si chas*" (the Russian equivalent of *mañana*.) We left him still muttering about "inefficiency, delay and red tape."

I noticed that Dr. Belskaya knew practically all her patients by name. She had a pat on the back for this one, a friendly joke for another, and a quiet word of sympathy for a third. The nurses in her section were mostly good-looking girls, straight and trim in their neat uniforms.

I talked with Hastings and Shimkin later about her. They said she was a crackerjack surgeon, particularly good at bone-grafting. They said that some of her technique seemed a bit radical, but that they could be wrong. "After all," Hastings said, "these Russian doctors have handled thousands of cases. I think it is fair to assume that they know what they are doing."

There was an orthopedic ward where a good many of Dr. Belskaya's ambulatory patients were getting their ground legs again after serious operations. Here was the only place where the hospital showed the shortages of war. The equipment the patients had for exercising was pathetic. There were six or eight weight pulls, half a dozen hand-grips, three or four volleyballs to be passed around, and one set of parallel bars. The grips were badly worn. I tried one, and found it squeezed like a ripe banana. Nearby there was a lounge room where the convalescent patients could relax. It was filled with tables and chairs, and I counted half a dozen chess sets for the amusement of the recuperating soldiers. There was also a magazine rack, and a library with possibly a hundred dog-eared volumes.

"We need equipment," Dr. Belskaya told me, apologetically. "We have had to share what we had with other hospitals."

I asked how Botkin fared in the collection, made in America, of medical equipment for Russia. "It has been very helpful," she said. "We received many badly needed items. But you can see the need is still great."

I talked to some of the wounded about this, too. They were wearing pajamas contributed by America and they were sleeping under sheets and blankets we had sent.

"*Amerikanski*!" the Russians would say, pointing to their pajamas, which obviously had originated at Macy's. "*Amerikanski, harosha* (good)!"

That was the typical reaction. But one Russian G.I. was more frank.

"Look," he said, "I don't want to be rude. These are American pajamas I'm wearing. And they tell me the sheets and blankets on my bed come from America. I appreciate that. I appreciate having pajamas, sheets and blankets, wherever they come from."

"*Puzhalista*," I said.

"But look," he said. "This is all very fine. But I would rather not have these clothes and this linen. I would rather not have it if it would help to give us what we really need. Now you are a foreigner, and I must be polite. But, really, don't you think you could have given us a second front?"

Second front . . . I knew the subject well. I was angry when Ilya Ehrenbourg broached it the first time. I had resented it very much. I felt like Ed Angly of the *Chicago Sun*. He was a curious blend of Texas and France. Ed used to say: "Second front? Suh, I don't know what you mean, precisely. We in America are not talking about a second front. We have eight already" And he would proceed to name them categorically—adding the incidental intelligence that he had covered them all.

It was hard to answer this Russian soldier, because he was talking from the heart, and I knew that were I in his place I too would feel as he did.

There were four soldiers in the room where I was talking to this Russian G.I. They had been listening to the conversation with great interest. Now another of them spoke up. He was a small man with dark hair and high cheekbones. "We are glad to meet some one from America," he said. "It is good to know that we have friends. When you have been fighting alone for a long time you begin to wonder, you begin to doubt"

I said that was natural, that I could understand that

"You must not think that we are ungrateful for what you have done," he said quietly. "But it is well to be honest, too. I am a soldier. I have fought in this war from the start. I have seen my comrades killed—many of them. And I have been wounded before. Perhaps you would not believe it, but this is the fifth time I have been in the hospital. Four times before I have come into the hospital and stayed for a while.

After a while I have gotten well. I have gone back to my unit and fought again. Now it is for the fifth time. After a while I will be well, and I will go back.

"The first few times it is not so bad. You do not think so much. But then it is the fifth time—and you go back. The sixth time—and you go back. The seventh . . . the eighth. As long as the war goes on—you go back. Well, you are not stupid. You know what it means. There must be an end to this, sometime. Your chances run out—probably they have run out already.

"Now, you may not realize it. But none of us want to die. We are Russians, and we are not afraid to die. That does not mean we do not want to live. We do not want to die. That is why, perhaps, we are not so enthusiastic about the blankets and the sheets and the pajamas. We have given our blood, a very great deal of blood. We are not sorry for that. But, now, much time has passed. You may think it is a rude thing to say, but we would be more grateful if you too, were giving your blood "

There is nothing to say to such a man. You do not argue with him when his deep eyes are burning dark in hollow sockets and he is gesticulating with an arm and shoulder swathed in bandage. You do not tell him that you are already fighting on eight fronts or fifteen fronts or whatever it is. Or that when the generals think it strategically wise they will launch the attack. You don't quote statistics to him of the millions of pounds of butter America has sent to the Soviet, or the jeeps, or the planes, or the steel, or the Spam, or the medical supplies.

You humbly shake his hand and quietly tell him it has been a pleasure to speak to him. You wish him good luck and walk out of the room. You feel his eyes burning through your back, even after you have turned the corner of the corridor and start downstairs. And long after you have left

Russia you can still see his eyes and you can still hear his voice.

Dr. Belskaya finally brought us back to Dr. Frumkin. He is tall and spare—about fifty years old, with bushy eyebrows and the sandy complexion, lean hands and dour dryness of a Scotsman. It seemed strange to hear him talk Russian instead of a Scots brogue.

He had a regular show which he put on for visitors, and he moved quickly into it. First came an inspection of the wards, where he had about 200 cases of men badly wounded in the lower abdomen—largely mortar, dum dum bullet or mine wounds, particularly the latter. They were horrible deep gashes through the lower back, shattered pelvises, punctured bladders, riddled kidneys, torn intestines—the worst wounds in the medical catalog. Many were men whose penises had been smashed or shot away. It was a special group of patients, sifted out by doctors at the intermediate hospitals. Frumkin was a genito-urinary surgeon, and to him were sent the worst cases which still had a chance for survival.

No human could walk through Frumkin's ward and emerge with any feeling that there was glory in war. I could not imagine worse wounds than some I saw there. Some cases were incredibly bad—so bad that no dressing could be applied and the patient lay on a bed inside a tent of blankets with electric light bulbs underneath to provide heat and protection against pneumonia. Others looked like living medical charts with the abdomens ripped open and their intestines exposed.

Then Frumkin showed us two or three men who had just been brought in from the general hospitals further forward. The routine apparently was well known, because as we approached their beds the men slid around, dropped down their pajamas and exposed their wounds. These were men

with stumpy jagged scars where their penises had once been, and usually with other damage to the pelvis and lower abdomen.

Then Frumkin showed us another group—men who had been in the hospital several weeks and on whom the preliminary repairs had already been made. Finally, he took us into his private office and seated us on the usual leather chairs. The walls were lined with cabinets filled with colored plaster models of his surgery. "Now," he said, "I will show you all the stages of the technique." He did it with living models, one after another—eight in all—and they depicted each stage of the operation.

It was really a simple technique but incredibly ingenious—or so it seemed to me. This is what he does: He makes a skin incision over the lower ribs, slicing through a strip of skin about three inches wide and ten inches long. He leaves both ends of the skin attached to the body and rolls up the strip, like a Russian pancake. On the inside he inserts a sliver of cartilage as a stiffener. He waits until the roll of skin has grown firmly together. Then, he snips off the upper end of the graft and attaches it further down on the abdomen, below the belly button. That is allowed to grow firm. Then the upper end of the roll is again detached. This time it is re-attached at the pubis, just about at the point where the penis emerges. The exact location of this final graft depends largely on the amount of destruction in the pubic area. Once this graft has taken hold firmly, the upper end is detached from the skin and the crude penis is allowed to hang free. The next and most delicate step is to create a substitute urethra and connect it with the actual urethra to provide a canal from the bladder and seminal glands. This is done by a secondary graft. More skin is taken and grafted on the under side of the newly constructed penis to provide a canal. Once the

connections are made and the graft heals the instrument is ready for use.

He showed us patients in all stages of the operation, from the initial graft to a couple of patients who were going to be discharged within the week. After we had seen the final patients, Frumkin said:

"This work is very important psychologically. Usually the patients arrive in a very bad mental state. Often, they want to kill themselves. They say life is not worth living. Psychologically, this is the worst wound the men suffer. It is also a very frequent wound, especially because of the mines. Mines go off under the men. You have seen what they do. A tankman is riding in his tank. A mine goes off, and the force of the explosion is upward. He may lose a leg—that is not so bad; he can get an artificial one. He may lose two legs. That is bad, but we can still fix him up. But if he loses his privates, he is more than depressed. He is ready to shoot himself. The men come here in the depths of despair. They do not really believe anything can be done. The first couple of days are worst. Then they begin to look around. They see men who have been wounded just as they have—maybe worse. And these men are happy. They are confident the operation will succeed. So . . . they lose their fears. They become happy, too."

I had seen that the morale of the patients was good. They stepped into the office nonchalantly. They grinned—almost proudly—when they unbuttoned their shirts and took their trousers down. They obviously were not suicidally inclined.

"But," I said to Frumkin, still not quite believing this miracle. "Does it really work?"

"Ha!" said Frumkin. "That is what they all ask me—my patients. They say: 'Yes, Doctor. We see how you have done this operation. But what will my wife say?' Well, now. That is very simple. I have many graduates of my course. They

come back to visit me, they and their wives. They say, thank you, Doctor, you have made life worth living again."

There was a twinkle in Frumkin's eye at this point. "You know," he said, "there has been much publicity about my operation." Indeed, I told him, there had been. I had read an account in *Time Magazine* just before coming to Russia. And there had been a piece in *Colliers*, too, by Quentin Reynolds.

"I get many letters," Frumkin said. "People think I can perform miracles. Some of the letters come from America. One was from a woman who had lost her left breast and wanted me to come to America and make her a new one."

Possibly all this sounds ribald. At the time, it did not. Frumkin's attitude toward his work was functional. Pathos and tragedy were involved. There also was humor. He did not exclude one for the sake of the other.

There was a lull in the conversation. Suddenly he chuckled.

"All over the world I get letters," he said, "even from China. I would like very much to visit America. But I do not know. There is so much work here. The work for Russia must come first."

I questioned him further about the actual workability of his artificial members. I had seen with my own eyes what he had done, and I had heard his story. Nevertheless there persisted a sense of incredibility.

"Well," he said, "I must tell you this. I am not always successful. This is a very delicate operation. Many things may go wrong. I tell my patients when they are discharged that they must take it easy . . . go slow . . . be careful—especially for a while. But only the other day, one of my young men came back to the hospital. He had been discharged only a month. But he had put too great a strain on the surgery, and some of the seams had been ripped. We

had to do a repair job, and when I sent him away I warned him that he had to be sensible. We can do many things—but not miracles.”

I told him that I gathered he had more satisfied patients than unsatisfied ones.

“Yes, indeed,” he answered. “Just yesterday there was a young man here with his wife. He was one of my first patients. They came to thank me.”

Frumkin said that he had developed his operation almost entirely since the outbreak of the war. Before the war, he explained, he had seen only one or two cases of this kind. The war had created entirely new conditions, and the operation was one answer to them.

“I am working now,” he said, “on the restoration of testicles. But this is a much more difficult question. The graft itself is not too complicated. But you must use organs from a living body. Naturally, material is not too easy to get.”

“What about women?” I asked. “Have you done any comparable work with them?”

He grinned. No, he had not done anything like this with women.

“The problem is quite different,” he said. “Their case is much more simple, due to the physiological difference.”

Later on, I asked Hastings and Shimkin what they thought of Frumkin’s operation. They said he was one of the best gastro-urological surgeons they had ever seen, and that his work on the restoration of penises was only a small fraction of his cases, something like 16 per thousand. They were actually more interested in his other work, but they agreed that this operation was more than a stunt—it actually worked.

“One thing,” said Shimkin, “has been proved by Frumkin—if it needed any proof. That is that the seat of sexual excitement is the cerebral cortex.”

Frumkin's moulages impressed them as much as his operative technique. They said they had never seen better ones.

"They are perfect for teaching his technique to other doctors," Hastings said. "Actually, he is spending a great deal of his time in teaching other surgeons how to perform these operations. This is probably more important than the individual operations which he does himself."

When Frumkin's demonstration was over, we went downstairs to the director's office, where a luncheon banquet had been spread—smoked salmon, caviar, cabbage and slaw, and three kinds of cheese and chocolate cake. Also red wine and brandy and vodka. After seven or eight *do adnas* I learned that the vodka was made in the hospital—by taking hospital alcohol and cutting it slightly with water.

There were innumerable toasts to Frumkin, after which the party broke up, with Frumkin insisting that we should all have one more drink and send the interpreters home, because they would no longer be necessary. He was so close to being right that I hastily scrawled a tribute to his work in the Botkin visitors' book and took my leave while I could still walk.

III

The hospital of the Moscow garrison is located in the old "German village" of Moscow—the once segregated area where foreign traders, experts and technicians brought into Russia by the more enlightened Czars were allowed to live in theoretical isolation. It is about twenty-five minutes' ride by tram from the center of Moscow.

As it happened I paid several visits to the hospital. A friend of mine, a Red Army Major, had been wounded in the great June offensive in White Russia. This Major was not a Russian. He was an Uzbek. And he was not a fighting man, he was a cameraman. Before the war he had worked

in the film industry. But since June, 1941, he had been at the front most of the time taking action pictures, and he had been very lucky. He had been at Stalingrad and Leningrad and in the Crimea and the Ukraine. There was hardly a battle he had missed, and he had never been wounded. He had taken some very fine action pictures, and he and the other men of his unit had been to the Kremlin and had been personally congratulated by Stalin. He had been attached to Rokassovsky's army. But just before the big offensive he was in Moscow, working on arrangements to be dropped by parachute among the partisan forces, either in White Russia or in Finland. Like any man who has been under fire for a long time he was not anxious to be killed. When you live in danger for any period of time you learn to cherish your life, but you also learn to calculate rather accurately the risks of any undertaking. Thus, he did not regard the project of parachuting behind the German lines with movie camera equipment with any thrill of excitement—but neither did he regard such an undertaking as any more dangerous than a "routine" front assignment.

The impending White Russian offensive, however, took matters out of his hands. Rokassovsky asked for him to come back to his army—and that settled that.

It happened on the third or fourth day of the offensive. The Russians had cracked the great German hedgehog positions and were beginning to roll. The Major was up before dawn, because the attack was going forward at first light. He wanted some pictures of the Red Army men advancing and, before the attack started, picked up his camera and moved up ahead of the Russian positions so he could take pictures of the infantrymen coming toward him. The lines were fluid, due to the rapid Soviet advance, and no one could be exactly certain how close the Germans were. He moved up a quarter mile or so ahead of the Red Army lines without

any incident. Then it happened. Three Germans with a machine gun in a concealed position opened up on him. The Major, burdened by his camera, was a few seconds too slow in diving for the earth. "I did not want to damage my camera," he told me. "It was a fine machine we had captured from the Fritzes in the Crimea. That was my mistake." Before he fell three heavy machine gun slugs had plowed into his right leg.

What saved the Major's life undoubtedly was the timing of this incident. He had moved out immediately ahead of the troops. Within a few minutes they came up behind him, wiped out the heavy machine gun and discovered him, conscious but bleeding heavily. He was rushed back to an aid post and quickly evacuated.

"The worst thing," he told me, "was my camera. It was hit twice. The Fritzes ruined it."

When I heard that the Major had been wounded and was in the Moscow garrison hospital, I went out to see him. Visitors were permitted to go in at four o'clock. The small ante-room of the hospital was jammed, and some of the crowd had spewed out onto the front steps. With one or two exceptions, it was a throng entirely of women. Some Red Army officers came while I waited to visit their comrades. They were admitted with no delay. The ordinary civilians, however, had to wait until four and had to get a pass first from a lackadaisical young woman who took about five minutes to write out each pass. When I came out an hour later some of the crowd was still waiting.

This was a very large hospital—certainly as large as Botkin. It was located in an old Czarist palace, a collection of buildings with scraggly gardens and parks in between. In the parks the ambulatory patients were strolling around, sitting on benches and clustered around the bulletin boards where the war news was posted. There were amplifiers here

and there, which were connected with the internal radio system. At frequent intervals in the park there were posters and bulletin boards with drawings and cartoons—all calling for death to the fascist invaders. They were the same posters and bulletins I had seen at the front in Leningrad and the Ukraine, and in the factories of Siberia and the Urals.

Before entering the building where my friend was quartered I had to don the customary white hospital smock. There were many visitors, and a limited number of smocks. So, I waited my turn. Finally, a young woman came out of the ward and turned her smock in, and I was able to get into uniform for the visit. The checking system was unique. I received no ticket but had to hand over a token to guarantee the return of the smock. The attendant said it did not matter what I gave her—anything that I wanted back would be fine. I gave her the big key to my hotel room at the Metropole. I noticed others who handed over books of subway tickets, parcels, ten-ruble notes and pocketbooks. There were even a few Red Army garrison caps left as pledges for the safe return of the cotton jumper.

It was a hot summer afternoon, but the corridor of the hospital was light and airy. There were about twenty beds in the room in which my friend was placed. One patient had his leg suspended under traction. Several were sitting on the bed of one of their comrades, talking in low tones. Two were huddled over a chess board. The others, including my friend, were just lying quietly staring at the white-washed ceiling and whitewashed walls.

My friend greeted me quietly. Uzbeks are generally a shy, quiet people. It was not one of his good days. His leg was in a great plaster cast. Twice since he had been hit the wound had become infected, and they had opened the cast and scraped the bone. Today he was running a fever, and

the leg was throbbing with pain. He was afraid it had been infected again. What worried him more was that he might lose it. The large bone of the leg had been shattered in three places between knee and ankle, and the smaller bone had been nicked.

Looking around the room, I was afraid that he was right. Most of the patients had small hoards of food on their bedside tables. The windows of this room, and of all the rooms in the building, were open. The screens—where there were screens—were torn and rusty. And the hospital was buzzing with flies. That the hospital management was aware of the problem, however, was evident. From the walls hung great strips of flypaper, black with flies. I could hardly repress a shudder. I knew very well that it was no easy task to manage a hospital in Russia in wartime, but I also knew that if Frumkin or Shimeliovich had been running this institution they would have found a way to screen out the flies if they personally had had to spend a week repairing the screens and cutting cheesecloth or cotton to fit the windows.

The Major told me the food in the hospital was poor and unappetizing. That I could understand and excuse . . . He did not think the doctors or nurses were taking proper care of him. That might or might not be true. The re-infection of his wound certainly was not a good sign. But the flies. I was tempted to write a letter to *Red Star* about the flies. And I wish now that I had. I think that place would have been cleaned up in a hurry.

The next time I saw my friend was shortly before I left Russia. He was feeling a little better. Since my first visit his leg had indeed become infected again, and they had once more opened up the wound. Now it seemed to be getting better.

We talked about Tashkent. Tashkent was his home, but he had not seen it since the start of the war. I had just come

back from there. I told him I had fallen in love with Central Asia and that Tashkent was a lovely city and Samarkand even more so. His eyes lighted up, and he smiled a shy Uzbek smile. He looked very much like an American Indian as he lay on the hospital bed with his shock of dark hair, his high cheekbones and olive skin.

"I have a house in Tashkent," he said. "It is very beautiful. There is a wall around it, and inside there is a courtyard. There are lemon trees and fig trees around the courtyard, and roses and all kinds of flowers; and in the center there is a pool. It is always cool, even in the summer."

I told him I had seen such houses in Tashkent.

"After the war," I said, "I would like to go there again and see more of Central Asia."

"Did you see Ferghana?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "Only Tashkent and Samarkand—and Alma-Ata, of course."

"Ferghana is the most beautiful place in the world," he said; and was silent for a moment. I was sure that he was seeing Ferghana all over again. When he spoke again it was even more shyly.

"After the war," he said, "would you really like to come to Tashkent again?"

"Truly, I would," I said.

"Then," he said, "you must be my guest. You must come and stay in my house and sit in my garden and eat of my food. It would be a great honor to me if you would do this."

"It is a great honor to me that you ask me," I said. "I shall be proud to come."

This was another hot day, and the flies were even thicker in his room than before. I did not see my friend before I left Russia, but I heard that his leg had again become infected and the doctors were afraid they were going to have to amputate.

The Bullet Is a Fool

I

Just west of the pretty town of Ekaterinendal, where Catherine the Great planted one of her German colonies in the Ukraine, there is a high hill from which you can see for miles in all directions across the open plains. I stood on the hilltop one sunny April day with a caravan of correspondents. We were going to Odessa, which had just been liberated by the Red Army, and we were traveling by truck from the little town of Novaya Odessa on the southern Bug.

Our truck had stopped beside a wayside shrine with a blue-and-pink figure of Christ on the cross. It was made of cast iron, and one of the hands had been broken off, possibly by Nazi troops who, we could see from the litter of powdered orangeade packets and "Waldorf Astoria" cigarette wrappers, had used this place as a camp site in their frantic retreat out of the Ukraine. On a nearby hillside, peasant women were sowing their wheat by hand, tossing out the grain in handfuls like an etching from Millet.

But from the high hill I watched a more amazing spectacle—the Red Army on the move, thousands of men and women—trucks, horses, carts, tanks, tractors—straggling across the horizon. It looked like nothing I had ever seen before. The Red Army was not moving along the highway in a precise military convoy, each truck twenty feet apart, at a regulated twenty miles an hour. It was surging across the open prairie, across the newly sprouting wheatfields, and the debris of last autumn's cornstalks and sunflower stems. It was flowing rather than moving, like a human tide across the fat Ukrainian prairie. In some places it moved in

columns of four vehicles, in others in columns of ten, fifteen, or even twenty trucks abreast. Brand new American Studebaker trucks, the Red Army's favorites, stalled behind coughing farm tractors pulling whole strings of peasant carts. There was even one cart towed by a moth-eaten camel hitched in tandem with a depressed looking mule. It looked something like a semi-motorized version of the opening of the Cherokee Strip.

All day long we traveled with the Red Army. It was on the move before we left Novaya Odessa in the morning, and it was still clanking forward long after midnight when we had reached Odessa. Most of the time it just swept across the open country, avoiding the roads, which were hip-deep in mud from the spring thaw. As the tracks across the prairie deepened the Red Army drivers merely turned out of the ruts and broke a new track in the soft earth. So far as I could see there was no organization to this movement, no system.

Sometimes we had ahead of us two dilapidated Russian Zis trucks on which were mounted *katuyshas*, the famous Red Army eight-barreled rocket. Sometimes the *katuyshas* stopped to get water for their leaky radiators, and fell behind us. In early evening we paused briefly at a little stream. The *katuysha* crews sputtered up behind us, and decided to camp there for the night. When we left five minutes later, the *katuysha* gunners had unlimbered their tommy guns and were trying to get their dinner by shooting some carp from a bridge over the stream.

Several times we overtook units of a Kuban Cossack outfit riding fine black horses and very dashing in their red-lined caracul caps and flowing capes. Mixed in between were great plodding trains of peasant carts, each with four or five infantrymen sprawled atop loads of ammunition, food and hay. There were few tanks and not many heavy guns, but

we could see from the tread-marks on the prairie that these had gone ahead.

This was not the first time I had seen the Red Army on the move. Deep in the winter snows outside Leningrad I watched the troops which lifted the siege moving west through the shell-splintered forests to come to grips with the Nazis still firmly entrenched along the Gulf of Finland coast. The heavy snow and thickly sown mines confined these columns to the highways, but there was the same apparent lack of organization and system. I remember saying that the Russians looked less like an army than like a collection of all the junk peddlers in the world.

It was not only the variety of vehicles that gave this impression. It was the way the Red Army men piled onto their carts, or trucks, or tanks every conceivable kind of possession—pots, pans, old blankets, odd bits of machinery, kitchen stoves and even, occasionally, an old mattress or springs. In other words, the Red Army on the move did not look like an army—or at least not a military army.

Since the Red Army actually was a very military army, and since the land across which it was moving west was strewn with the evidence of this in the form of Nazi corpses, wrecked German guns, tanks, and trucks, it was obvious that the apparent disorder concealed a very effective system.

We had an example of this on the trip to Odessa. We were driving into the city, near midnight, only two days after the Germans had left. None of our escorting officers had been there before. They did not know where we were to stay nor even whom to contact once we got to Odessa, much less where they might be found. The only thing they knew was that at some point outside Odessa, location not specified, we would meet a traffic control officer who would have instructions for us.

Sure enough, at a crossroads so close to the city that you

could smell the burnt-sweet smell of the still smouldering slaughterhouse, our dim headlights picked out a chubby little Red Army girl who was directing traffic into Odessa. Our driver identified us. Oh, yes, said the girl. There was an officer waiting to meet us. He had been waiting since yesterday morning. He would take us into the NKVD security headquarters, and they could tell us where we were to stay and whom to see.

II

To find out why the tatterdemalion Red Army columns achieve highly professional results, it is necessary to investigate the situation in which Russia found herself at the outbreak of war.

Russia had certain assets. She had a large, well-trained army. She had an elite officers' corps, largely professionals, who had spent most of the years since the Revolution in the Army. The upper officers were graduates of the Frunze Military Academy, a combination West Point and General Staff College and of various special military academies. The officers' corps undoubtedly equaled any in the world, and had the advantage of actual experience in warfare, in two major campaigns against the Japanese in Manchuria, and in the winter war against Finland. They knew their business. The Russians had large quantities of excellent tanks, even larger quantities of good artillery and generally good materiel. Their air force was large, but not the equal of the German Luftwaffe in quality. Motorized transport was weak, but this was not as great a handicap as it would have been in the west because of Russia's lack of highways. The railroad system was good.

Russia had an industrial plant big and efficient enough to meet her military needs; territorial space for any possible manoeuvres; and the largest population in Europe to fill

her regiments. But six months of war wiped out many of these advantages. Masses of the trained troops and officers were lost in the Nazi envelopments. Much equipment, particularly armor, went with them. Air losses on the ground were heavy. Great arms production centers were captured. So was space for manoeuvre. In no time the Red Army was dipping into less trained cadres, and had to turn out multitudes of new troops to rebuild the shattered divisions. War industry was kept going by desperate expedients, and by concentrating all production—literally all—behind the Red Army. What counted now was just one thing. Results. Once more the “logic of facts,” of which Stalin is so fond, was exercised to get the most out of whatever material, human or mechanical, was available. The cloth was cut to fit the situation. And there was no dearth of situations in the first two years of war.

For example, Marshal Budenny was defending the southern front at the outbreak of war, and was forced back on Kiev. He was an old hell-for-leather cavalry crony of Stalin's from civil war days. Drawing back to Kiev, he made a courageous stand, but he held on too long. Nazi columns flanked the city and drove eastward, and finally, much too late, he was ordered by Moscow to fall back toward the Don. By this time the Germans were well across the Dnieper and on the verge of encircling virtually all the Russian armies of the south.

Budenny's retreat approached a disaster which might well have ended the war. The Russian columns streamed east out of Kiev on two or three main highways, and snarled themselves in the world's worst traffic jam. Reckless truck drivers darted in and out of traffic until they collided head-on with cars moving west. The retreat was tied into knots, and German Stukas had a field day, while Nazi panzers harried the Russians on the flanks like Red Indians attack-

ing a covered wagon on the Oregon Trail. One of Budenny's staff men told me what happened.

"It was the only time I was ever afraid of bombing," he said. "We were moving east as fast as we could. One day the German Stukas came over. They seemed to know what they were after. The only place they seemed to attack was a grove of trees. It seemed as though they thought Budenny had set up his headquarters in that grove. They dropped their bombs right in the middle of it. I was frightened to death."

"What was so frightening about it?" I asked.

"Well," said the officer, "it seemed that Budenny really had set up his headquarters in that grove, and, it seemed that I was right in the middle of it."

At any moment it appeared that the Germans would succeed in cutting the highways far to the east and close a noose around the whole Budenny Army group. In this crisis Marshal Timoshenko suddenly relieved Budenny.

"Within two days Timoshenko saved the situation," Budenny's Major told me. "Our losses were heavy, but Timoshenko got traffic going on the highways and saved the Army to make a stand on the Don."

"How did he do it?" I asked.

"Very simple," said the Major, with a wry smile. "He merely posted signs at regular intervals along the highways. There were two sets of signs. One said 'Any driver who gets out of line on the highway will be shot.' The other said 'Any driver whose machine breaks down on the highway will be shot.' There were no traffic problems after that."

This simple, hard-boiled—but practical—device is typical of the Red Army. This kind of thinking kept the Red Army going through mud that mired the Nazi panzers, and enabled it to storm positions which military experts called impregnable.

At the American airbases in the Ukraine the Russians handled security—they posted the sentries around the fields, the storehouses, the workshops. When our fliers landed there from England or Italy, they were told: "When a guard says: '*Shtoy*' he means halt. And if you know what's good for you, you will damn well '*shtoy*'."

That was no joke.

When a sentry is posted by the Red Army he is given specific orders, for example, to halt anyone approaching within twenty feet of a certain building. Even if a General tries to enter the building, the sentry will shoot first before letting him in. The only way in which the sentry's orders can be changed is by changing the sentry himself.

Here is a procedure which is simple and almost impossible to misunderstand. Even the most ignorant or ill-trained soldier can hardly confuse such an order. Most Red Army men and women are literate in the sense that they can read and write, but many have only the rudiments of an education. The paperwork and elaborate organization which are the foundation of the United States Army would baffle the Red Army. The Red Army, like Russia herself, has hardly any of the "commercial machinery" which such a system requires—typewriters, telephones, adding machines, dictaphones, teleprinters. Soviet industry was too busy during the war turning out bullets and cannon to provide such equipment.

That does not mean the Red Army lacked organization. On the contrary, it means that it developed a type of organization and rules which utilized its manpower to the best possible degree. In that organization discipline was substituted for many material things.

For example, units very often were placed on their own responsibility for moving up to the front. They were merely told to move forward until they got further orders. How

they moved and by what transport was their own affair. But they had to get to the front—that was an order. This is the explanation of the curiously mixed columns moving up to the battle lines. Each artillery battery, tank outfit, cavalry brigade was on its own. It had the responsibility of getting forward by its own locomotion. And no excuses accepted.

As the Red Army columns neared the front, officers with wide discretionary powers watched the plodding units. They functioned something like traffic sorters in a freight yard. An infantry company appeared, a mixed group, made up in part of Red Army veterans, and in part of new recruits picked up in just-liberated towns a few miles back. The officer halted the company and singled out half a dozen graybeards, sturdy peasants but too old for frontline fighting. "Give me those six men," he told the company commander, "and give me half of your girls. You have twenty-four. You won't need more than ten or twelve."

The company commander turned over these people and was told to take his outfit on up the highway to another control officer, who would give him further instructions. Ten miles up the road the company was directed by the second control officer to camp in a nearby forest along with some other infantry groups to await further orders. The soldiers went into the woods, built a fire and brewed some *chi*. They took loaves of black bread from their worn knapsacks, and possibly a little sausage and cheese. If there were wild berries or mushrooms in the forest they picked some. That was their mess—no rolling kitchens, no C-rations, practically no supply problem. If it was summer, they slept in the open, because the Red Army had practically no tents. If it was winter, they bivouacked in some little village, sleeping with the peasants in their cottages.

Back at the traffic control point, the officers told the six old men and the dozen girls to sit down beside the road for

a while, and as more infantry outfits came along he combed them out, adding to his collection of non-combat personnel. When he had enough he told them "Take the crossroad and follow it six kilometers until you come to the river. You'll find them building a bridge there. Pitch in and help "

All day and all night, this officer and scores like him sorted the units as they came along the highways—this group to go into infantry reserve, these two companies to merge into one, this tank outfit to go to a certain front sector, these men to start repairing the highway, these girls to help out at the field dressing station, this group to move in with the railroad repair crew. These officers had great latitude, and great responsibility. They were the men who made order out of the chaotic columns.

At Tarnopol the Russians employed a terrific mass of artillery. The Soviet artillery general was asked how many guns he had.

"Oh," he said, "I used more than I ever had before. We had thousands of them "

"Well," said the Allied officer who was questioning him, "what caliber did you use?"

"All calibers," said the Russian.

"If it does not violate your security regulations," the officer said, "just how many guns did you employ?"

"It's not a question of security," the general replied, "frankly, I can't give you the figure because I don't know what it was. I just took all the guns I could lay my hands on, and lined them up against Tarnopol "

I was taken around the German fortifications outside Leningrad after the Russian breakout, and I tried to find out what was the weight of the Soviet artillery barrage which had broken these positions. Three different Red Army officers gave me three different answers, and I thought they were deliberately trying to mislead me. After I heard

the artillery general's statement, I decided they had used at Leningrad "all the guns they could lay their hands on."

I have often seen Russian tank outfits rolling along toward the front—very unmilitary looking tanks with six or eight young Red Army boys and girls riding along the sides, and possibly an old ox cart loaded high with bedding and kitchen utensils hitched on behind.

One of our generals, seeing one of these curious outfits for the first time, got the crew into conversation.

"I suppose," he said in his best Russian, "that you're giving some of your pals a lift up to the front."

"Oh, no, sir," a grimy-faced little sergeant replied, "we are all members of the same crew."

The general blinked.

"But there must be nearly twenty of you altogether," he pointed out. "How big are your crews?"

"Well," said the sergeant, "we run the tank and we fight with it. Some of us fight in the tank and some outside. We are all interchangeable. One day Josef drives the tank. If he's tired, Mishka takes over. If Mishka is tired, I drive the tank. Some of us are expert mechanics. We fix the tank if it gets hit. Naturally, sometimes we have casualties. There is always somebody here to take the place of anyone who is killed or wounded."

This simple system was the Russian solution of the greatest tactical tank problem—how to keep them in action and get them operating again quickly once they break down. As usual the Russian solution sought to reduce the supply problem to the minimum. This particular tank was towing a six-wheel truck which had lost one front wheel, and behind the truck was fastened an ox cart laden with duffle, with a samovar tilted crazily on top the heap.

The crew explained that their truck, loaded with shells, had slewed in a ditch about twenty-five miles back, losing

a wheel. They were towing it along until they found a wrecked machine from which they could "cannibalize" a new wheel and start the truck along under its own power. The peasant cart, they said, would jolt to pieces in another ten miles or so, but by that time they would find another cart and transfer their possessions.

Improvisation, cannibalizing, and putting responsibility for supply and movement on the individual unit—those were keynotes of the Red Army's solution of forging a mass army out of poorly trained peasants and an industry strained to the utmost to provide the basic requisites for combat—guns and ammunition.

I spent a couple of days in the Crimea riding around in an American jeep—called "vileez" by the Russians—with a driver named Mihail, who had fought at Stalingrad. Mihail looked like a Brooklyn cab driver, but he loved that jeep like a baby. He felt it was a great honor to drive a jeep, and a greater honor to drive an American correspondent.

Mihail scared me. I had ridden several thousand miles in jeeps, but I never had a driver like this stocky little Georgian. Mihail sped over Crimean mountain highways as though he were trying to win the 500-mile Indianapolis race. The road was carved out of sheer cliffs, and had been blown up at the narrowest points by the Germans. Mihail never looked at it. His eyes were fixed on the sides of the highway and lingered longest at the wrecks of the machines piled up at the constant succession of dead man's curves. As we approached a ninety-degree turn with a clean 3,000-foot drop to the sea he would slam on the brakes and slew the jeep to a halt only inches from the cliff edge. Before the jeep stopped skidding he would hop from his seat and race to the skeleton of a half-track, fumble in its innards a moment and then race back. I decided he was crazy—jeep-happy.

But gradually as the jeep filled up with a collection of nuts, bolts, washers, inner tubes, grease guns, wrenches and what-not, I got the idea. Mihail was his own supply officer, and he was laying in spare parts against the day when he would need them.

In general, during the war, the Red Army supplied the bulk of the food, the bulk of the ammunition, the bulk of the transport, the bulk of the clothing to its men. But if supplies ran short, it was every man for himself. The Germans, in retreat, were almost as helpful to the Russians in their supply problem as we were with our vast aid-to-Russia program. Near Yalta one night I ate a Red Army banquet at which almost everything, except for the caviar and vodka, was taken from captured Nazi stores. The Red Army equipped artillery divisions down to the last gun with German materiel. On the southern front, at one time, I estimated after a careful count of vehicles that forty per cent of Soviet transport was American, thirty per cent captured German and the remainder Russian trucks and carts.

"It is my responsibility," a young artillery officer once told me, "to see that my unit has sufficient ammunition. We carry our own shells behind our guns on trucks and carts. We get a certain amount from Russian supply depots, but this runs out. We are lucky because our guns are the same caliber as the Germans', and the Nazis leave plenty behind when they run. Sometimes, we are moving up to battle and we are short of shells . . . Well . . . we keep our eyes open. Maybe that night we camp near another battery and its men sleep very soundly . . . Next morning we go into battle with our quota of shells. After all, supply is an individual responsibility."

One of my first assignments in Russia was to report on the great massacre of Polish officers and soldiers in the Katyn forest. I noticed that these thousands of corpses were

fully dressed, but the fact meant nothing to me. Many corpses wore winter overcoats, and they all had their boots on.

"It is obvious," some of my colleagues said, "that this is a German atrocity. The Poles are still wearing their boots."

At first I thought this was a joke—a rather grisly joke. But that was before I saw the Red Army salvage squads on the battlefields, working over the terrain. The first thing a Red Army soldier did was to hunt for a pair of boots that would fit him. The Red Army man was on the march constantly, and he needed more boots than his quartermaster could possibly supply him. A young Russian general told me he wore out four pairs of boots in one month of hard fighting in the spring mud.

I watched a parade of some 58,000 German prisoners through the streets of Moscow in the summer of 1944 after the big central front break-through. It was a fascinating spectacle; and not the least fascinating aspect was the foot-gear of the Germans. There were many barefoot Germans, and many with their feet wrapped up in rags. There were also a good many Germans wearing shoes, GI-type, but hardly a Nazi who marched down the Moscow boulevards with his boots. Why? Well, Red Army men wear boots—they don't care for shoes.

By improvising in supply and transport the Red Army gained in mobility and was able to utilize a far higher percentage of its troops in combat than a western army. The same approach was applied to the organization of the Army itself, particularly in the last year and a half of the war. Take the traffic control officers for example. They picked combat units out of the columns going to the front, and sent them to camp in a forest to await orders. Each day, more and more combat outfits camped in the forest. Possibly a week later, a caravan of staff cars arrived on the scene.

"We," a major general would say, "are the staff of the —th division. Do you have some troops for us?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply. "Up in that clump of woods you will find your units."

Properly speaking, the staff did not find a "unit" but, rather, the cadre of a division. The staff itself was made up, in part, of officers from various divisions, newly promoted, possibly around the remnants of a command left from a division shattered in heavy fighting.

Naturally, a division formed in this manner was not a first-class fighting outfit, because it lacked training and esprit de corps. But the Red Army had an answer for that, too.

In addition to these "mass" divisions, it had a hard core of elite troops. These were the Guards divisions, the outfits of battle-tested tankists, veteran artillerymen, demolition experts, sappers, specialist troops of all kinds whose experience was forged at Stalingrad, Leningrad, Kursk-Orel, all the key battles. These were break-through troops who cracked the toughest German positions time and again. They knew how to smash Nazi pillboxes and pulverize Nazi hedgehogs. They created the openings and drove through into the clear behind the fortified zone. Behind them came the "mass" army which subdued the Germans by sheer numbers.

I interviewed a Nazi colonel who belonged to one of Hitler's crack infantry divisions—an outfit with a record in France and in the early Russian blitz.

"Why did you retreat," I asked him. "Didn't Hitler give you orders not to yield an inch? Did you disobey that order?"

"Our general," the colonel said, "regarded us as one of his best divisions, and he wanted to save us for later battles. In spite of Hitler's order he told us to retreat."

"What happened?"

"We could not retreat. The Russians were too strong. They broke our perimeter defenses. Then they poured down on us like a flood. They seeped through everywhere. Before we knew it, there was no place to retreat. They swamped us."

If you went to a Russian front four or five days after a break-through, you probably would find none of these specialists there. Once they had opened up a hole for the "mass," they melted away into the void. Actually, as you came up to the lines, you met them, trundling their *katyushas*, their M-34 tanks, their Russian "long toms" off to another assignment. A week later, a hundred miles away, the Red Army made another break-through. The attack was led by the same troops that made the break-through a fortnight ago, but now they were a hundred miles away, either north or south.

These are the techniques which enabled the Red Army to weather enormous losses and still keep pushing back a foe which had an army better organized and better equipped than the Red Army. But the Russians made what they had go a long way.

III

Red Army strategy and tactics were affected by the same things that governed its organization. The Red Army did not use strategic bombing, for example, for the simple reason that it had no strategic bombers. This was not by choice but by necessity.

Russia entered the war with a small force, possibly 100 or 200, of four-motored long-range bombers. Many of them were lost in the opening Nazi blitz. A decision had to be made promptly. Should the strategic bombers be replaced or should Russia concentrate on other planes. This was

really no decision at all, since there was obviously only one answer, in view of Russia's comparatively limited engine capacity. Russia abandoned four-engine planes and concentrated on single-engine machines.

Strategic bombing is high-cost warfare—high-cost in materials, but low-cost in life. It weakens the ultimate but not the immediate capacity of an enemy to resist by destroying his fuel capacity, his arms plants and transport. These were laudable objectives, but the Red Army could not afford them. Russia had to have planes to protect her combat troops and to attack the Nazi combat formations. That meant fighters and fighter-bombers.

As a substitute for strategic bombing behind the German lines, the Red Army developed guerilla and partisan warfare to an extent previously utilized only in China. The partisans could hardly knock out a big manufacturing plant as the Fortresses did, but they could cut down output by sabotage. They could and did harass the movement of supplies, ammunition and troops by blowing up bridges, roads and trains. And the partisans could engage almost as many troops as the Forts tied up on ack-ack duty—troops which the Germans were forced to maintain in the occupied regions to protect their communications and lines of supply, thus reducing the number available for the front.

Naturally, the Russians did not develop the partisans merely as a substitute for Flying Fortresses but, militarily, their function was much the same. Here, as elsewhere, lack of technical means meant that human lives were sacrificed instead of materiel.

The Red Army fought the war without radar—not because radar was not a valuable military weapon, nor, indeed, because Russia didn't have it. They developed their own radar in their laboratories, and we also gave them our radar instruments. But Russia did not have sufficient skilled

personnel to use radar on a wide scale even if she had had the machines.

The Red Army decided realistically that the effort, manpower and materials could be more efficiently used in other ways. They were aided in this decision by the fact that the Luftwaffe never engaged in persistent strategic bombing on the eastern front.

Nor, of course, was the Red Army able to develop an atomic bomb. Here again the decision was based on economy of effort. Russian research in the atomic field up to 1941 may have been abreast of that in Germany, England or the United States. Probably the first "kidnapping" of an atomic scientist was that of the Russian-born physicist Peter Kapitza, in 1935. Kapitza had been working on the atom at Cambridge when he was invited to Moscow to attend a scientific gathering in 1935. He never came back to Cambridge. The story is that the Russians told him he was needed in his Motherland; that he owed it to the land of his birth to dedicate to her his vast scientific attainments. Kapitza is said to have protested that only at Cambridge did the equipment exist which he could utilize for his experiments, and that he would be useless in Russia without his laboratory. That objection was overridden by a promise not only to duplicate his Cambridge facilities, but to provide him with every aid to his work.

Whatever the facts, Kapitza did, indeed, settle down in Russia, and is still there. It is also true that no prima donna at the Metropolitan could be treated with more consideration than Kapitza, who acquired in England a blunt, direct way of expressing his opinions on many subjects which are usually considered delicate in Russia. Kapitza is only one of a number of Soviet scientists who have applied themselves to the problem of the atom. Another is Professor Jaffe of Leningrad, who is almost equally distinguished. Yet there is no

doubt that had Kapitzza and Jaffe come to the Red Army in 1942 with a program for spending two billion dollars in an effort to find an atom bomb the proposal would have been rejected, Russia did not have, during the war, a sufficient reserve of technicians and scientists to allow her to concentrate so many on such a project, no matter what its possible outcome.

But, it might be noted, Russia is probably making up for lost time already. When Germany was cracking up, Red Army troops quickly made a special point of occupying the Danish island of Bornholm. This probably was no accident, since Bornholm was one of the Nazi centers of atomic research. It is safe to presume that all data and equipment they found and also anything at the Schweinemunde laboratories has long since found its way to Kapitzza's laboratory and the Soviet experimental stations.

The greatest achievement of the Red Army, however, was not in the field of supply, or organization, or equipment. It was in molding the ordinary Russian soldier into a fighting man who was as good as or better than any other fighting man in Europe. The Russian pattern was cast by the great Russian General, Alexander Suvarov, who set forth this creed for the Russian soldier: "The head of the Army does not wait for the tail. The bullet is a fool—the bayonet is a sportsman; fortune goes past like a flash of lightning. Seize her by the hair; she will never come back to you." Suvarov made the morale and welfare of the ordinary soldier his first concern. It was no accident that he was established as one of the ideals of the Russian Army in World War II.

Constantly the commanders hammered away to improve their troops. When Budenny, first, and then Timoshenko, proved that they were too old to handle mass armies on modern battlefields, Stalin set them to training new troops. He knew that the bitter combat experience of both men

would reflect itself in redoubled efforts to raise the technical ability and morale of the green cadres.

When it was finally decided to abandon the divided command created by the unique institution of political Commissars the system was not just thrown on the junk pile. The Commissars, often better commanders than their military colleagues, were incorporated right into the army to lead outfits of their own. At a single stroke the Red Army almost doubled its available officer personnel—an increment badly needed after the bloody losses of the summer and fall of 1941.

The story of how the Red Army pulled itself up by its own bootstraps can be followed easily in its newspaper, *Red Star*. The only resemblance between *Red Star* and *Stars and Stripes* is that both happen to be Army newspapers.

Red Star is deadly serious. It prints no pin-up pictures, no Bill Mauldin. Ilya Ehrenbourg was the closest it had to an Ernie Pyle—and that is not very close. Ehrenbourg's approach to a problem is more like that of literate left-wing Pegler. *Red Star* is read to all Red Army men, and they hold a daily discussion to bring out the points of its articles and editorials.

From the start of the war until the Battle of Moscow had been won, *Red Star* made one and only one appeal. In editorial after editorial it cried: "Stop the Enemy at All Costs!" Article after article told the stories of Red Army men and women who had given their lives that their country might live. The theme was repeated again and again—the glory of death for the Soviet Fatherland. Red Army men were told not to fear German planes, nor German tanks, and not to be afraid to die. The attention devoted to the Luftwaffe and the panzers clearly showed the concern of the Red Army command over the terror impact of the Luftwaffe-panzer team which had demoralized the armies of the

West. And the emphasis on self-sacrifice made it apparent that the high command understood from the start that Russia would have to pay with her lives to stop the Nazi machines.

Red Army men read that they were to stay in their trenches, and let the Nazi tanks pass overhead. They read how to dig into foxholes and toss grenades at the tanks when they came within throwing distance. Anti-tank gunners were told to hold their fire until they could bring the panzers under their open sights. Whatever happened the Red Army man was told to stay at his post and to die there, if necessary, to stop the Nazi advance.

After the first onslaught of the Germans was halted before Moscow, *Red Star's* line changed. A new note appeared during the critical summer of 1942, when Rostov and Novocherkassk suddenly were lost and the Nazis crashed deep into the Caucasus. For the first time what is known as "Soviet self-criticism" was applied to the Red Army. The note, actually, had been sounded first by Alexander Kornachuk in his play, "Front." Kornachuk flayed old-fogy thinking and Colonel Blimp tactics in the Red Army. *Red Star* picked up his line and drove it home to the common soldier, and to the rapidly growing mass of new non-commissioned officers and new junior lieutenants.

Up to this time the emphasis had been entirely on following orders and obeying discipline, on bravery, and what amounted to suicide tactics. Now the idea was advanced that commanders were not necessarily perfect, that it was the duty of every Red Army man to keep his eyes open, to think quickly, to improvise new methods to meet attacks. Blind adherence to doctrines based on the guerrilla operations of the civil war was ridiculed.

And, with the example of the German advance into the Caucasus obviously in mind, every Red Army man was told

that cities must be defended, block by block, street by street, house by house, and even room by room. This, of course, was preaching the doctrine of Leningrad. It was preaching the doctrine which was expressed to its fullest degree at Stalingrad.

As the trial of Stalingrad approached, *Red Star* perceptibly changed. Instead of emphasis on killing Germans, the emphasis was placed on *how* to kill Germans. It was apparent that the basic lesson—that the Red Army must stand, no matter what the peril, that it must destroy Germans, even though dying itself—had been learned. Now, the task was to learn how to do this more efficiently.

Each month that the war went on the Red Army learned new lessons, and each month it hastened to apply these lessons generally. When Red Army units had spare time on their hands, they gathered around their commanders to study new lessons instead of going off to Red Cross canteens or camp movies. Not that they had much choice, since neither canteens nor movies were generally provided by the Red Army.

But mostly they learned in the greatest school of all—experience. The Red Army fought its way to proficiency, and this was true of commanders as well as soldiers. More than in any other army the test of generals was battle. If generals failed, they were replaced. In the galaxy of great front commanders with which the Red Army emerged from the war, only two had held positions of prominence in June, 1941. They were Marshal Georgi Zhukov, who was chief of staff at the outbreak, and Marshal Ivan S. Koniev, who had commanded the second red banner Far Eastern army.

The average age of Soviet generals was the lowest of any army in the world. Major-generals in the Red Army (corresponding to our brigadiers) were common in their late

twenties and early thirties, and Red Army infantry colonels were as boyish as those in the American air force.

The Red Army learned more than battle tactics during the war. As in peacetime, it was a great educational system in which the Tadjik peasants, and those from the forests of Siberia, broadened their knowledge of the world. Always under the Soviet this had been a prime function of the Army. As a matter of fact, this had been true of the Czarist army, too, where in the absence of a general educational system many peasants got their only knowledge of reading and writing from the Army.

In their four years of war the men and women of the Red Army learned many things. Possibly the most important thing they learned was the machine. For the first time in the lives of many of them machines became an intimate and familiar part of everyday existence. They drove jeeps and they repaired trucks. They learned to maintain tanks and keep their guns in good firing condition. In a nation where only the present generation has been born into a machine age, this is a forward step of incalculable significance. It means that going back to every village and town and farm of Russia will be men to whom machinery is an integral part of their existence.

Perhaps they are not so good at keeping the machinery going as the kids from Main Street in America. Perhaps, they are likely to forget to put grease in the crankcase. But at least they know what the crankcase is—and that is going to make a difference in Russia's shops and factories, and in her tractor stations and collective farms.

There is going to be another change in the Main Streets of Russia. In not a few towns and industries, the Communist Party managers are veterans of the old days, bureaucrats whose membership dates back to the Revolution. These old comrades long since passed their days of efficiency, if any.

Now flooding back into every nook and cranny of Russia are young men and women of energy and spirit, accustomed to command, accustomed to results and with the know-how to get results. And they, too, are Communist Party members—members by virtue of their battlefield records.

It is a safe guess that dust is going to fly in many drowsy corners of the Soviet when the boys all get back home.

Pigtails and Uniforms

I

The snow came down in fluffy big flakes and clung to my heavy coat. By the time I had walked three blocks from the Metro station my glasses were coated, and I had to take them off to see as we walked through a narrow alley into an interior courtyard where the solid red-brick school building stood. My interpreter said it had been hit by a German bomb during the raids on Moscow, but apparently the damage had been very slight, as there was no sign of it outside or in.

The building was old, erected some years before the Revolution, and inside there was that familiar smell of a school—chalk dust, cleaning waste and small perspiring bodies. It took me back to my days in Sumner grade school in Minneapolis. It smelled like a school, and it looked like a school.

A flight of steps led from the entry hall up to the principal's office. There were plaster busts of Stalin and Lenin, and faded steel engravings of Marx and Engels. At Sumner school there had been busts of Washington and Lincoln and steel engravings of Franklin and Charles Sumner.

This was a girls' school, and it was the first Soviet institution which I went to see after I got to Russia. There was a good reason for this. I wanted to see what made Russia tick, and the schools seemed like a good starting point. It was the first of the requests I made to the press department which was fulfilled, and one of the few on which I ever got action.

My interest in the schools had been whetted when I read that there had been far-reaching changes in the Soviet edu-

cational system, ordered only a few months before my arrival in Moscow.

My interpreter on this occasion was a young Russian woman who happened to have a small daughter almost of school age. When she learned we were going to visit a girls' school she was excited and pleased.

"This is very interesting to me," she said. "Now I can see what sort of school my daughter is going to attend."

"That's fine," I said, "but what is so interesting about it? You know the Russian schools, don't you? You attended them yourself."

That, it appeared, was just the point.

"We had a wonderful time in school back in the 'Twenties," she said, "but we did not learn much. When I went to college I began to appreciate how little I knew. When I got out of college and went to work as a translator—well, it was almost like starting out in kindergarten again I began to appreciate what real study meant."

The picture she painted of Soviet schools in the first ten years after the Revolution was new to me. The schools, of course, were coeducational. But with the early enthusiasm of the Revolution, the system had attempted to achieve a theoretical ideal rather than a practical one. The students had almost unlimited self-government. What limits there were the students soon demolished. If the professor proposed that they spend the morning studying algebra, the students could—and often did—call for a vote. If they did not agree with the study schedule they would vote an alternative program—something "practical," such as a visit to a factory, a park, or a museum. Ten minutes later the harassed professor would be buttoning up his overcoat to accompany his unruly pupils on an outing of some sort. If, as was natural, they did not like the questions put to them in an examination, the pupils could summon a meeting and ap-

prove a petition that their teacher be withdrawn and another, "more ideologically acceptable," be substituted. If they did not like their marks, they could demand that the teacher be ousted on some specious grounds, such as maladministration or prejudice.

The teacher was literally at the mercy of his students. Naturally, the teacher who managed to hang onto his job was likely to be a good-natured fellow who winked at breaches of discipline and did not mind a heavy schedule of "field trips." The system of grading was so loose that it was almost impossible to fail in an examination.

Moscow boys, then as now, were notable for their toughness. In the upper grades the boys spent more time teasing the girls than they did with their books. Moscow girls did the same thing.

"Why," said my interpreter in a shocked tone, "you can't imagine the things that happened in our classes. It was scandalous. The boys and girls sat together. They used to scramble for seats in the back of the classroom. Then, instead of listening to the lectures they would hold hands and tell stories. If anyone ever learned a thing it was purely by accident."

I do not know how accurate that young lady's picture is. I wasn't there. I suspect that it is probably overdrawn, but no doubt there was a great deal of looseness in the schools. This was almost inevitable. After all, the Soviet was engaged in a vast social experiment. Education had been sharply restricted in pre-1917 Russia, and there were only a handful of trained teachers to man the vastly expanded school system.

Whatever the faults of these schools, I was to see later what they had done for the country. I saw Central Asia, where literacy was less than five per cent under the Czars. There Soviet education was lifting a people up from three

centuries of poverty, disease and ignorance. But that lay some months ahead.

Now, on this snowy morning I had my first look at Soviet education. The principal was a quiet, tired woman of about forty. Her hair was like faded gold and she spoke softly, as though each breath of air was a treasure not to be wasted. It was chilly in her office, and she wore a gray shawl around her shoulders. Occasionally she coughed very gently. Looking at her you could see something of the toll the war had taken of Russia's civilian population—the long, long hours of hard work, the meager food, the cold in winter, the struggle just to survive. I felt embarrassed to be exhausting even a small store of her energies.

But of that there was no talk. She started to tell me briefly and efficiently the basic facts about the school. "We have 506 girls," she said. "There are ten grades. The classes are Russian language, arithmetic, geography, natural science, English, German, French (which is optional), history, constitution, physics, astronomy, draftsmanship, drawing, singing and military science."

I was surprised (though I should not have been) to learn that the girls were instructed in military science. I thought perhaps that was something new, because of the war.

"No," said the principal, "military science has been part of the curriculum ever since the Revolution. The training begins in the fifth grade. From the fifth grade to the seventh they spend three hours a week. It is largely sports and drilling. They learn to ski and to march. But they also learn to handle firearms—how to fire a rifle and run a machine gun. From the eighth grade to the tenth they spend four hours a week. They practice shooting on the ranges. And beginning with the eighth grade they learn a specialty. In our school it is military radio operation. They also learn first aid to the wounded."

The specialization of each school on a particular military skill, such as radio work, she said, had been introduced in the reorganization of the educational system beginning in January, 1943. At that time, due to the war, the military program had been expanded, the most important change being the training of girls to take up specific duties with the Red Army.

Sewing, dancing and knitting were learned by the girls in "circles"—a kind of extracurricular activity sponsored by the school. This was an innovation stemming from the abolition of coeducation. Originally there had been little home economics training in the Soviet schools, on the theory that it was not needed in a communal existence. Now it had been introduced, and soon cooking and other such subjects were to be brought in.

"You must understand," the principal said, "that the program is all very new. It was only started in the autumn, and there are many changes. For instance, now for the first time, beginning at the eighth grade, we give the girls lectures in sex education and maternity care. This was never possible before the separation of boys and girls."

I asked what the girls wanted to do when they grew up. "We have thirty-three girls in the tenth grade," she said. "Twenty-seven of them have made up their minds. Two wish to have a literary career, two have specified art, two medicine, one physics, one radio, two geology, one electric power, three aviation, two machine building, one chemistry, one designer and so on. In the ninth grade we have six girls who want to specialize in foreign languages, six in medicine, four in the theater, three in literature, one in architecture, three in law and one in botany."

I asked about the health of the youngsters, and she said it was good except for a flu epidemic in the late fall when 170 of the 506 girls had been out. That seemed about the pro-

portion that would be out under similar circumstances in an American school. Twice a year the girls were given physical checkups, and there were a nurse and a doctor in attendance at the school, just as in this country. I could see nothing either very revolutionary or progressive about the set-up.

We walked through the school, visiting classes at random. Although until this year the school entering age had been nine, there were many tots who looked not more than six or seven, showing the effects of war privations. They were two to three inches shorter than American kids of their age, and fifteen to twenty pounds below them in weight. None of them was fat. In Russia the children, in spite of all efforts, have suffered almost the same hardships as their parents, and you can see it written in their faces.

I was often reminded of this, later. In the great war plants of the Urals and Siberia the crack workers often were youngsters of twelve or thirteen—or so they looked. They may actually have been a year or two older.

I remember one occasion at Tikhvin, on the railroad line to Leningrad, where our train paused for fuel and water. We got off to stretch our legs, and soon were surrounded by half a dozen curious railroad workers, none of whom had ever seen a foreigner before. We passed out some chocolate, which they munched with great appreciation. Then one of them asked for a *pappirossi*—a cigarette. I passed my pack around. Each took a cigarette and started to puff away. They were sooty and greasy—oilers and wipers and mechanics. As they were smoking, another worker joined them and asked for a cigarette. The leader of the group, a lad who must have been ten years old, said quickly. "Don't give him one. He's too young." The late comer probably was six or seven years old; and he resented not getting a cigarette until I gave him a stick of chewing gum. This he examined with care and started to thrust it into his mouth, wrapper

and all. I restrained him and took a piece myself, showing him what to do. He looked on in wonder, then unwrapped the gum and took a small bite. He folded the paper wrapper carefully and placed it in his pocket. Later, I saw him trade the pink wrapper to one of his comrades for the butt of a cigarette.

The first classroom I visited was the English class. The little girls sat quietly at their desks, their hands folded in front of them. Most of them had their hair plaited in pig-tails tied with red ribbon. Around their necks they had the red kerchief of the Red Pioneers.

"Imagine!" my interpreter whispered to me excitedly, "they wear their hair in braids!"

I confessed I saw nothing startling about this

"Oh," she said, "when I went to school none of the girls wore their hair in braids. I had pretty hair and my mother wanted to do it up in braids, but I would not let her. The children would have called me bourgeois!"

The children were reading exercises aloud—sentences like: "The room has three tables and a chair", "There is a window in the room", "What is on the table?" They stood when they recited, and spoke the sentence. Then the teacher, a cheerful middle-aged woman with glasses, would repeat it after them, correcting the pronunciation, and the little girl would try again.

The principal looked at me anxiously as I listened to the English recitation. I told her later that I thought the youngsters were doing much better with English than American kids of their age would do learning Russian. This was true, too. She looked relieved.

As we left the class I noticed on the wall a colored photo of Shirley Temple.

"Do the children know about Shirley Temple?" I asked in some surprise.

"Oh, yes," the principal said. "They are very fond of her."

In the Russian language class we found them deep in an analysis of one of Pushkin's poems. In a history class a male teacher was lecturing on the Napoleonic war. There were, I learned, twenty-seven teachers, six of them men.

Then we went into the music room, where the girls were grouped around a piano. This was only a few weeks after the composition of the new Soviet national anthem. The girls were learning it, and they were having difficulties. The teacher would play a phrase on the piano, singing with it. Then the class would try, falling a little flat on the sonorous chords. Over and over again they sang the same passage, unable to satisfy their instructor. As we left, she said for the twentieth time: "No, no . . . Now listen . . ." And she struck the chords and sang out the words, still smiling and enthusiastic. It might take some time, I thought, but when the girls learned the anthem they would really know it.

I noticed in the singing class two little girls who did not have the Pioneers' red kerchief, and I asked the principal about it.

"One of them is far behind in her work," she said, smiling slightly. "The other was rude in class. So they lost their kerchiefs. Now they will have to work to get them back."

"How do you get to be a Pioneer?" I asked.

"They must be good in their classes, work hard, learn their lessons and observe discipline," she said.

The Pioneers are the lowest rung on the ladder to eventual membership in the Communist Party. From the Pioneers the children move into the Young Communist League, and from the YCL into the CP.

It was through the powers of the YCL that the children in the post-revolutionary days exercised their influence over teaching and curriculum. But it is no longer like that.

With the basic change in Soviet education the central committee of the All-Union YCL was called into session in early 1944 and N. A. Milhailov, the secretary, laid down the new rules. He explained the changes in the school system, the segregation of sexes, and the general lowering of the school age to seven years. He outlined the new system of marking with grades from one to five instead of the previous system of "bad, poor, indifferent, average and good." He noted frankly that socialist competition—a basic factor in Soviet industry—had been banned from the school system because it led to a decline in scholastic requirements, due to the fear of teachers that quotas could not be filled. And he explained that grades no longer would be marked on a basis of the average work of all pupils, since this led to an artificially high level of grades. Accompanying these fundamental changes were a two-thirds increase in state educational funds, and plans to increase the number of pupils by 4,200,000. He then laid down the new line for the Young Communist League.

Its activity must not run parallel to that of the schools, separate from the school educational program and resulting in duplication of effort and time. It must be closely integrated with that of the school and all meetings, social evenings, campaigns and contests must be approved by the school authorities, who will utilize the YCL to increase the educational strength of the schools.

"Inasmuch as full responsibility to the state for the education and rearing of the young generation is borne by the school and the main role in this belongs to it," he said, "the work of the school Comsomol and Pioneer organizations must be regarded as an integral part of the whole educational work carried out in the schools by the directors and teachers."

Teachers, he ruled, are to be allowed to attend Comsomol

meetings, whether they are members or not, and are to guide the Comsomol organizations in their activities, even to the point of approving applications for membership in the Comsomol. School directors have the right to veto "incorrect" decisions of the Comsomol school organizations, and are empowered to recommend to the district Comsomol organization the dissolution of school Comsomol.

Nor are Comsomol meetings any longer to have the right to criticize teachers, thus undermining the authority of the teachers with their pupils. And the whole Comsomol organization right up to the Union Republic committee level is barred from carrying on any independent inquiries into the schools—although they may do so at the request or with the approval and collaboration of the school authorities.

The duty of the Comsomols, said Mikhailov, must be to set an example of diligence, obedience and zeal for learning. Every misdemeanor by a pupil must be punished in accordance with the rules for pupils. Teachers who are strict in their demands upon children must be supported unanimously by the Comsomol.

There can be no doubt that this is a change of radical and far-reaching nature. It places Soviet education securely in the hands of the teaching organization, and it even places in the hands of the teachers membership in the Comsomol—the Young Communists, stepping stone to party membership.

It is interesting to note the parallel between the unification of authority in the Soviet schools and the similar unification of authority carried out in the Red Army through abolition of the dual system of military commanders and political Commissars. Both reflect not only a determination to strengthen authority but an increasing reliance upon the Soviet state itself, rather than the state-within-the-state, the Communist Party.

The bell for the noon recess sounded as we completed our inspection of the school. The girls trooped into the halls and back to their "home" rooms for the lunch which the school serves. I watched them as they sat at their desks.

"The school lunch is a great help," the principal said. "Many of them don't get too much to eat at home."

I looked at the girls again. Each of them had a glass of watery tea with a lump of sugar. Each of them had a bun, made of brownish sweetened bread. And each of them had a tangerine, about the size of a walnut. That was lunch. They were a long way from the fighting lines that day, these children, but the fighting lines were not very far from them.

II

"How," I asked the partisan, "did you happen to leave your unit and come back on this side of the lines?"

"Well," he said, "I have been a partisan a long time, and I was entitled officially to a rest. So I was sent out by plane."

"What sort of work did you do with the partisans," I asked.

"Well . . ." he hesitated, taking a long breath, "we ambushed Germans, we attacked them on the roads, we derailed troop trains, we destroyed ammunition trains and we blew up dumps."

I wrote this down carefully in my notebook.

"What was your job?"

"I was a scout. I helped with the ambushes."

"Did you kill any Germans?"

"Oh, yes. I had a German revolver. I killed some, but I don't know how many. I just fired my revolver at them and I saw them fall."

"How did you win your medal for courage?"

The partisan blushed and then said:

"It was in April, 1942. A lot of Germans passed through our area with munitions and troops. We had to find out how many they were and where they were going. That evening I started for a village at the intersection of the highways. I traveled all night, and it was ten in the morning when I got there. I knew all the people in the village, so I went to a friend and he told me that the Germans had been passing that way frequently.

"The village had been burned down by the Germans, so I went out to a thicket of birches where I could watch the road. About an hour and a half later a German column appeared. There were about 100 cavalymen, 300 motorcycles and 15 trucks. I counted the column carefully, and then started back to guerrilla headquarters to report."

I asked him whether he had any trouble

"Not to speak of," he said. "A German sentry stopped me on the way back. He wanted to know where I was going. I had a pack on my back, and in it were two pairs of new straw shoes. I told him I had been to my aunt's and had traded some bread for the shoes. He didn't speak very good Russian, and he let me go. When I made my report to headquarters, we organized an ambush and wiped out the German column."

I asked where he had been when the war started.

"I was at home," he said, "the Germans got to our village in July. They started to shoot the villagers. They shot about half the people in town, including my family, but I ran off in the woods I hid there. I hoped I would be able to join the partisans. Two days later I ran into a partisan outpost, and the commander let me join him."

"Let me see," I said, "whether I have everything down straight. Your name is Lazar Burstein?"

"Yes."

"You are 13 years old?"

"Right."

"Jewish nationality?"

"Yes."

"And your home was in the Orel oblast."

"That's correct. In the Orel oblast."

This interview occurred at the Suvarov school in Kalinin a few months after it was opened in 1944.

Lazar was one of 510 pupils at this school, and the school was one of nine which were functioning at that time. Since then the number has tripled.

The Suvarov schools are another new phase of the Soviet education system. They were introduced late in 1943, at the time when the whole Soviet school system was shaken up. These are not the boys' counterpart of the girls' school in Moscow, although the basic curriculum is that of the state school system. These are special schools operated under the general supervision of the Red Army, and the closest parallel to them in America is the private military academy

The youngsters who attend them are a picked lot. The 510 students at the Kalinin school, for example, were chosen out of 14,000 applicants. These applicants are carefully screened. Special preference is given to the sons of Red Army officers, soldiers or partisans, particularly orphaned sons, and to sons of officials or others who have made an outstanding contribution to the state, and to children, like Lazar, who played an actual role in the war, either in the partisans or in the Red Army itself.

A board of admissions has been set up in each area, composed of party leaders, educators, physicians and other local leaders. They pick the cream of the applicants, and give them a general educational test with special emphasis on mathematics. The top boys in this group are sent to the school, where they are given a second and more severe test. They are also given a thorough physical examination.

Those who pass this test with top honors are then admitted to the schools.

While these schools will, without a doubt, provide the Red Army with a superior class of officer candidates, the boys are not required to enter the officer corps. As Major General Victor A. Vizzhilin, commandant of the Kalinin school, put it: "The object of the Suvarov school is to make the pupil a cultured and literate citizen. He can take up any career he wants."

The first schools were established in war-devastated cities, but gradually they have been spread until most good-sized Soviet cities, wherever located, have Suvarov academies. The need for schools in the devastated areas is obvious because schools, along with all other normal facilities of government, were physically destroyed by the Germans and schools were not allowed to function during the occupation. The Nazis shot Soviet teachers when they could lay their hands on them.

One of the most horrible memories which Russian minds carry over from the last war is that of the "wild children." These were youngsters, homeless and without parents, who roamed the country in the days of the civil war, living off the land more like wolves than humans. The Government was determined that there should be no repetition of that this time.

As the Red Army liberated Russian soil, it swept up the stricken populace with it, particularly the children. Because there usually was no other agency at hand, the Red Army took in the youngsters, both boys and girls, feeding them at its messes, giving them whatever shelter and housing it could and such clothing as was at hand. Thousands of kids tagged along with the army as orderlies, messengers, scouts and mascots. Not a few of them have now won appointment to the Suvarov schools.

The boys enter at 8 and graduate at 17. Boys from 8 to 12 or 13 were taken in the initial classes, and now no more will be accepted until 1947, in order to get a balanced series of classes. After that a new class will enter each year.

The boys wear smart black uniforms with a red stripe down the trousers, red epaulets and cadet caps with patent leather visors. They are supplied five uniforms a year, including a white summer parade uniform. Russians have not failed to remark that the Suvarov uniform is almost identical with that worn by the Czarist cadets, but Vizzhilin warned me against such hasty comparisons.

"The cadet schools devoted most of their time to military education," he said, "and it was compulsory upon the youths to enter the Army. Our curriculum calls for only about the same amount of military study as is provided by the general schools, and there is no compulsion to enter the Red Army. What we provide is a superior general basic education."

After studying the Suvarov curriculum and watching the boys march smartly from their classrooms, saluting their officers, sitting in their mess hall like tiny ramrods, each with his napkin tucked in the prescribed manner under his chin and eating the soup, almost in military cadence, it appeared to me that if the Red Army did attract the majority of these boys it would acquire an officers' corps with a combination of ability, education, polish and manners which could hardly be equaled.

In an auditorium I watched a light-footed blonde young woman patiently initiating about twenty-five ten-year-olds in the mysteries of the waltz. A gray-haired old pianist sat at the piano beating out the time. Around and around in a circle the youngsters skipped, led by their teacher. Their faces were solemn and preoccupied, as they doggedly tried to make their stubby, boot-clad feet go in the right places. They carefully kept their eyes fixed on the young woman

and betrayed no sign that they had noticed that a group of foreigners were watching their practice. The boys were learning the waltz, the polka and the mazurka—no modern dances and no dancing with girls. That, I presumed, would come later.

Discipline at the academies is firm.

"We have a system of reprimands," Vizzhilin said. "First, the individual reprimand. Then, the public reprimand. Then, the parade reprimand. If the youngster is still bad we take his epaulets away and he must walk two paces behind his fellow students. Under the statute we can place a boy in solitary confinement up to three days. But," he continued with a twinkle in his eye, "we have no place of confinement, and we find that it has a sobering effect just to mention this statute."

"Are there any other punishments?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "there are. If a boy is bad, we tell him he can have no dessert tonight. That works best of all."

Actually, he said, there had been only one disciplinary case of consequence since the opening of the school. This concerned a youngster who was coarse in his language and rude to his teachers, and who smoked cigarettes and stole from his classmates. He was warned many times, but without effect; and he finally had been expelled.

"He has written a letter to his classmates," he said. "I do not think we will have any more cases like that."

The letter had been reproduced in the mimeographed school paper, and I copied it off. It went like this:

"Greetings to you Suvarov boys and teachers:

"I am writing to tell you I miss your school terribly. I am in a children's home in Kalinin. I want to tell you to work properly and I deeply regret that I dropped out of the school but it is too late now.

"Do not behave the way I behaved. How happy I should be to come back to school. I am badly fed, not the way you are being fed at school where you have everything and are being taken care of.

"Do your work properly and don't follow my example. I wish you all success.

(signed) ARKADI KISELEV."

A key line in that letter is "I am badly fed." Youngsters in Russia had to share the hardships of war with their elders—not because the Government or people wanted it that way, but simply because there was no alternative.

Probably no children in Russia fare better than the Suvarov boys. They have good quarters. The Kalinin school was housed in a building which had been a school before the war and was used by both the Germans and the Russians as a base hospital. It was a clean, well-heated structure. The boys were well and warmly clothed. They had a doctor who checked their health constantly, and in the few months they had been in school every boy had gained weight and there had been no case of infectious disease. Some smaller boys lost weight at the start, but the doctor cut their schedule to give them two extra hours of sleep; and they started gaining, too. The lads were getting at this time four meals a day, providing 3,600 calories. This included a ration of powdered eggs from the U.S.A., 200 grams of meat, 50 of butter, 50 of sugar, 300 of white bread, 400 of black bread and 45 of dried fruit. They had only one meatless day a week, whereas most Russians were lucky to have one meat day a week. There was no milk in their diet, but the school was arranging to get twenty or thirty cows to provide them with at least a pint a day.

Once a month they had a full physical examination, compared with twice-yearly checks in the general schools. In

summer the boys spent a couple of months at camp or in a country datcha with a program of sports, physical training and nature study about like that of the American Boy Scouts. Youngsters with parents (75 percent of the boys are orphans) could go home for a fortnight or a month in the summer.

Their education was equally impressive. Grading was on a basis that required about 25 per cent better performance than in ordinary schools. At this time they were still using the regular school textbooks, but new ones were being prepared. The teachers, most of them women, had been drawn from the Soviet public schools, but their work was under the supervision of the Red Army educational department.

This represents no break with Soviet tradition, as the Red Army, of course, has long been a major factor in Soviet education. It played a big role in reducing Soviet illiteracy by its emphasis on study and education as a vital ingredient of military training. Nor was this emphasis lost in the war when the Red Army continued and even expanded its adult education program.

Possibly one of the most interesting innovations of the Suvarov schools is in the study of geography. In Soviet public schools pupils always started their geography with a study of Russia. They later got a sometimes cursory summary of the geography of the world. In the Suvarov schools study of world geography comes first, and only when it has been well mastered does the student start in on Russia. The study of history has been reorganized, too, and divided into six sections. The first deals with Russia up to Peter the Great. The second with Russian history from Peter to the present time. The third with ancient history, Greece, Egypt, Mesopotamia and China. The fourth with the decline of Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages. The fifth with the

Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The sixth with the Nineteenth Century.

We asked some of these youngsters what they wanted to be when they got through school. Out of twelve who were questioned, here are the replies: "Artist," "I don't know," "I don't know," "My fate is not yet settled," "construction engineer," "composer," "Don't know," "I haven't pondered the subject yet," "We will see later on," "The future will show," "artist," "soldier"

One youngster went through a spirited questioning by some of the correspondents, who asked him queries that might have caused even an experienced diplomat some difficulty. The topper was a question about what the lad thought of Japan—with which Russia was then at peace.

"England and America," he said, choosing his words with care, "have helped Russia very much. They have fought against Germany and are fighting Japan. Japan is an ally of Germany, which is an aggressive country."

He did not come far from stating the case just as Stalin put it some months later.

Stalin Is Gray

I

One chilly morning in June, 1944, I was making my usual trip back to the Hotel Metropole from the Narkomindel, where I had been checking the papers and filing my daily story on the Russian Front. I was hurrying because it was nearly 11 o'clock, and I wanted my breakfast. Following my regular route down the Kuznetsky Most past the pet store (the only pets they now had were a few miniature turtles), the map store which had long queues whenever it received any maps, and several book stores, I neared the art store. A huge crowd almost blocked the sidewalk outside the show windows of the art store, and I elbowed through to see what was the attraction.

It was a new portrait of Stalin.

For months there had been in the window an heroic oil painting of Stalin, showing him in a dugout conferring with his staff. His hair was black and his eyes were sparkling. I knew this picture well from glancing at it every morning as I walked back to my hotel. But today it had been pushed to one side, and foremost in the window was a new portrait of Stalin. It showed him in a winter scene, standing in a long, military greatcoat against a background of snow and birches—not a picture of any great distinction. But my Russian courier gasped.

"Look," she said, clutching my arm in excitement. "He's got gray hair!"

"Certainly, and not a bad photographic likeness," I said. "It is much better than that study of Stalin in the dugout."

"But," she persisted, "he's got gray hair—and look at the lines in his face!"

That made me sputter.

"Good Lord," I said, "of course, he's got gray hair. I should judge he has had gray hair for several years. What of it. That's the way he looks."

She frowned at me in exasperation. Sometimes, it was evident, foreigners could be very stupid.

"Don't you realize," she said, "this is the first time Stalin has been shown with gray hair? Why do you suppose all these people are gathered? This is very important. It means a change in the line."

"A change in the line" is the most important thing you can say in Moscow. Every day people read the newspapers, listen to the party orators, harken to the radio and watch the slogans posted on the buildings. The exciting thing they watch for is—a change in the line.

"This is important," my courier said, "for the first time, officially, Stalin is getting old."

"What nonsense!" I said. "Of course he's getting old. He is in his sixties. Everyone knows that. I imagine he has been getting gray-haired for fifteen years." Checking back, I find that Stalin's gray hair was first mentioned in descriptions written in 1930. "I don't see why you are excited."

My courier gave me the pained look you reserve for a small child.

"You don't understand," she sighed. "You have seen Stalin. You know what he looks like. The people—the general public—have not seen him since 1941. They have just seen his picture. Always the pictures are the same—Stalin, black-haired and eagle-eyed. The pictures have never changed. Now today, this very day, his picture is exhibited—and he has gray hair. This is the first recognition that Stalin is getting old. Now the people will begin to think: 'Stalin

is getting old. He will not be with us forever.' It is the first step to prepare us for the day when Stalin will die. You saw the people who were staring in the window. Until this morning they had not thought of the fact that Stalin was getting old. They will think of it now "

I walked past the art shop almost every morning for six weeks, and every morning there was a crowd outside the shop. People seemed fascinated by the sight. While logically it was difficult for me to feel the sensation which this portrait caused—after all, Stalin is now sixty-six, and there could be few Russians unaware of the fact—there was no doubt that this feeling was very real. And, on examination, it was clear that Russian instinct in this matter was correct. The national propaganda identified Stalin completely with the state—so completely that, particularly to a poorly educated peasant, the two were virtually synonymous. But the directors of the Soviet state are far-seeing. They know very well that Stalin is no immortal, and that one day there must be a change. In Russia they prefer that the people be prepared for changes. This was the first step—a small pebble thrown into the vast seismographic pool of Soviet opinion.

People would look at the portrait and say. "Why, Comrade Stalin is getting gray I had not realized that he was growing old Well . . . *nichevo* . . . so it is. Some day he will no longer be with us."

At first it would just be people hurrying along the narrow street who saw the portrait in the window. But a little later they would be in their offices or shops, and they would tell the man or woman at the next desk or bench: "This morning I saw a new portrait of Stalin in the Art Shop. You should see it. Stalin is getting gray. I hadn't realized he was growing old—but you know, the war, and all . . . After all, he is no longer a young man."

And that night the workers from the neighboring benches

and desks would go home and would tell their wives and friends about the portrait. So the news would spread. Eventually, I supposed, the portrait would be published in the Central Papers of Moscow—and then throughout the Soviet Union. Within a month after it appeared, the little ripple of the Moscow shop window had spread across the Soviet Union. Very soon all of Russia was thinking: “Well, Comrade Stalin is getting *gray*. I never noticed it before in his pictures. But *nichevo*, what does one expect? He is only human. How old would you say he is? In his sixties, to be sure. One of these days he no longer will be with us. Grant that he lives to see the day of victory over the *nemetski*.”

I suppose that Stalin himself was indirectly responsible for the display of this portrait and the alteration in the current of public opinion which it produced.

The portrait symbolized a thought which has been recurring to Stalin more and more frequently in the past few years. One of Stalin's great sources of strength is his practical turn of mind. He does not delude himself about what is true and what he would like to think is true. “The logic of things is stronger than any other logic,” he said in 1942.* There is no evidence that the campaign—carried to fantastic lengths by Western standards—to glorify him and to identify him with all that is good and great in Russia has ever turned his practical head.

Stalin feels his years. True, his health is good. He seldom suffers from colds, and his stamina withstands his grueling schedule. But, if reports are to be believed, he was told a couple of years before the war that he should beware of too great strain on his heart. There is no evidence that he ever curtailed his schedule because of this medical advice. But there is no doubt that he is thinking more and more of his mortality.

* J. V. Stalin, address to Moscow Soviet, Nov. 6, 1942

There are no foreigners who know Stalin well, but, due to the war, there are several diplomats who have seen him repeatedly. They have had an opportunity to observe Stalin, intimately. What they report is interesting. They talk with him about the chronic problems of Russia and the Western democracies. Stalin replies, prefixing his remarks with phrases like this: "If I live, we will do so-and-so", "If I do not die, you can count on us to do such and such"; or "My plan, if I am still living, is . . ." Stalin is a realist. And he is now facing the fact that he is coming to the end of his years. It would be my guess that his most intimate associates, members of the Politburo, have been hearing these qualifications for several years. They have pondered them and finally, in 1944, they determined that the time had come to prepare the country for the inevitable event.

The Politburo, of course, was right. The Politburo seldom makes mistakes. Stalin is a member of the Politburo, and his word weighs heavily with it. I do not suppose that if Stalin told his associates he had decided on such-and-such, he would ever be voted down by the Politburo. But I am equally certain that a member of the Politburo would have no compunction about arguing if Stalin brought in an idea and said: "Here is what I propose to do—what do you think of it?" There has never been any sign that the Politburo has been overawed by Stalin. Stalin, of course, is their leader. But he is not the kind of executive you cannot speak up to.

II

There is, in America, a popular conception of Stalin as an all-powerful dictator, a kind of combination Caesar, Napoleon, Peter the Great, Hitler and Huey Long—all rolled into one. That is not my impression, nor, I think, is it the impression of most persons who have been in Russia since

the war. I cannot prove it, but I think Stalin is subject to at least three separate controls.

The first control is that of Russian public opinion.

I suppose most foreigners will be startled at the idea that Russian "public opinion" exists, or that Stalin is guided by it. This is one of the fundamental misconceptions from which we start our thinking about the Soviet Union. Actually, public opinion is a most important factor in Russia.

It works like this: In the first place, the Soviet Government goes to extraordinary efforts to mobilize behind its policies the support of the workers and the peasants. No other government makes such an effort for complete unity. The Government employs every possible mechanism to win the support of the masses. This starts with the radio network—the internal radio, loud-speakers on city streets, and amplifiers in factories and apartment houses. The Government's "line" is expounded in broadcast after broadcast. No American manufacturer is more dogged or persistent in getting across his sales appeal.

Equally important is the press. Here, too, you get the Government line drilled in, day after day. Every publication in the Soviet Union is mobilized. During the war all magazines in Russia printed the Soviet communiqué—or at least the most important Stalin orders. The historical reviews, the children's magazines, the sports weeklies all published as their first item an Order of the Day by Stalin—a *Prykas*.

The line is carried to the workers in the factories and offices by "party agitators," who get their instructions through weekly and monthly guidance pamphlets; to the troops through their officers, many of them former political Commissars; to the children in the schools; to the movie audiences through historical films and newsreels; through slogans and posters on the walls and on bulletin boards.

All this molds public opinion in Russia; and when opinion is well molded it can be relied upon for guidance.

But a second process is going on all the time. The vast machinery for dissemination of the official policy is reporting back what the people are saying; what they are talking about; what their interest is centering on. The *Agitprop* explains the policy, and then the workers fire questions, make criticisms, and conduct a town meeting. In the privacy of their discussions, frankness is general. Thus, information on public opinions flows back to the higher Soviet levels. It is something like a continuous Gallup poll. And there is no doubt that the Government is guided by this information. There are indications that the leaders are particularly sensitive about opinion trends in the Army. This return flow of information is reflected almost daily in the press in the form of what is called "Soviet self-criticism"—newspaper crusades against practices and procedures which the public is complaining about.

Stalin is the leader of his country, and a leader with remarkable powers; but what he can do and how he does it are constantly modified by Russian public opinion. Sometimes the Government feels it necessary to make a sharp, sudden swing in policy—such as the signature of the Russo-German pact in 1939. But the propaganda-wise Russians had detected signs of what was afoot for some weeks before the event, through the peculiarly cryptic hints of omission and elision which make the Soviet press constantly interesting—like a daily puzzle game. The Russians accepted the pact with great foreboding. The Russians I spoke with were unanimous in saying that because the Government signed it, the Government must have been right for reasons which were not clear to them. But they were worried by it.

There is no doubt that the Soviet Government was aware of this public reaction. This may partially explain the curi-

ous in-and-out press treatment given the Western Allies during the war. The Kremlin may be providing insurance in the form of some public skepticism about her allies against the unwelcome day—should it arise—when it might be necessary to break that association.

The second control to which Stalin is subject is that of the Politburo.

This tight little group of eight men and five alternates is the ruling body of Russia. Within this circle Stalin is only one member, although, naturally, the most important. But the association is intimate and close. Anyone who studies the organization of the Soviet state can see that the Politburo debates all major political questions. Stalin's is the most powerful voice within the junta, and should he feel very strongly on a question he could undoubtedly carry the day against his colleagues. I believe he has done that on occasion. I do not believe, for example, that his colleagues were by any means unanimous on the question of the Tehran declaration. You can not prove it, but obviously there were lengthy discussions within the Politburo before a decision was made that there should be a "Tehran."

A careful reading of Stalin's public pronouncements during the war bears this out, particularly his very important address of November 7, 1942. When this was delivered Russia was bitterly disappointed at the Allied decision to land in Africa in November, rather than in Europe the preceding summer. This bitterness was deepened by the success of the Germans, who had swept into the Caucasus and carried to the Volga at Stalingrad. The Stalingrad battle was at its height when Stalin spoke, and the outcome was by no means certain. One thing was plain, however. Failure of the Allies to open up the second front had cost the Russians great manpower, territory and materiel.

Thus, Stalin's speech reflected the second-front bitterness;

and he taunted his Allies for their caution. Then he went on to a detailed argument about the possibilities of victory and of collaboration among the Allies. Ostensibly these arguments were designed to answer foreign propagandists and unidentified persons of faint heart at home.

On re-reading the address today there seems little doubt it reflected the actual debates of Stalin and his colleagues in the Politburo. Stalin took up their arguments and made plain why he did not agree—why, despite the differences in ideology among the Allies, the coalition could and would work together for victory.

Some of his colleagues must have needed convincing. After all, the belief that the fundamental objective of capitalistic states was the destruction of Russia was one of the first tenets of the October Revolution. Russians believed this as firmly as Westerners thought that the fundamental Russian objective was the destruction of the capitalist states.

The spectacle of the Western armies fighting only a small desert war while Russia spilt thousands of lives a week to repel a thrust into her very heart was hardly calculated to weaken such prejudices. As Stalin frankly admitted two years later, there were "serious differences" over the second front.*

I am sure that it must have taken much of Stalin's skill in argument and the prestige of leadership to hold his reluctant colleagues in line. But hold them he did, and Tehran was the result. Ideologically, the decision was profound. By it the Soviet Union abandoned a practical isolation of twenty-five years standing and embarked on the great experiment—not only for the war but for postwar—of co-operation and collaboration with her traditional enemies, the capitalist nations of the West.

* J. V. Stalin, address on 27th anniversary of October Revolution, November 6, 1944.

When the die was cast, there can be no doubt that Stalin cast it. It is his kind of a decision—pragmatic rather than doctrinaire. As he said, it is “the logic of things” which counts. To win the support of his skeptical colleagues he undoubtedly said something like this: “You doubt whether this experiment will work. You do not trust our allies fully. Well, that is very natural. Neither do I. But let us agree to this: We will cooperate. But we will also keep our eyes open, our ears to the ground and our fingers crossed. We will be on guard, and when something happens which arouses suspicion we will not hesitate to act and make our position plain.”

Stalin is not a perfectionist. Like Lenin, he has shown himself ready to use a handy stick to beat a mule. He again appeared to be speaking over the heads of his people to some of his colleagues when he gently chided those who made too much of differences of opinion between Russia and her allies.

“Differences do exist, of course,” he said, “and they will arise on a number of other issues this week. Differences occur even among people of one and the same party. One should not be surprised because differences exist but because there are so few of them and that they are as a rule solved almost every time.”

I do not believe Stalin would ever commit Russia to a policy which the bulk of the Politburo opposed. But I do not believe such a situation could ever arise. These men have worked together too long. The trend of their views is toward identity.

The third control over Stalin is one which is unusual to us. It is largely a physical control and it is exercised by the NKVD, the Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs.

Most people think of the NKVD as a sinister secret police which carts off Russians in the dead of night and sends them

packing to Siberia. Well, there is something in that impression, of course. The NKVD does things like that, occasionally, but in the Russian theory its basic function is this: To guard and protect the security of the Soviet state.

Interpreted broadly, as its function is, this gives the NKVD an authority over Stalin which is similar to, but much more comprehensive than, that of the United States Secret Service over an American President. The NKVD is charged with the responsibility for Stalin's personal and physical safety. It carries out that duty with remarkable literalness. Nothing is left to chance. For example, at Tehran and Potsdam the NKVD guards, uniformed and plainclothes, literally swarmed around Stalin's villa. When Stalin visited Churchill or Roosevelt, the NKVD did not merely deliver their chief into the hands of American or British guards. Soviet guards followed on in and gave him physical protection even while he was conferring with his Big Three associates. When Stalin unprecedentedly attended a dinner for Churchill in the British Embassy in Moscow, the NKVD arrived an hour ahead of time and took up strategic positions to the amazement and annoyance of many of the Embassy's occupants.

The NKVD exercises strict control over Stalin's movements. It regards itself as the State's trustee for Stalin, and it will not allow this most valuable human asset of the state to be jeopardized in any manner. The way the NKVD guards Stalin is symbolic of the extreme emphasis which the Soviet places on its security, generally.

But the role of the NKVD goes further than Stalin's physical protection. Being charged with the protection of the security of the state, its voice on policies carries great weight. The explanation is that the existence of the Soviet has been repeatedly threatened from beyond its borders. It was born in a struggle in which foreign intervention played almost as

great a role as internal opposition. This fixed firmly in the minds of the state leaders the fact that the world abroad was dangerous. Psychologically, this fear was intensified by the Soviet "purge." Whatever the validity of the "purge," and there seems little doubt that it had a hard core of fact although Stalin himself denounced its excesses, psychologically it intensified Russian xenophobia. Atop that came the German attack. Small wonder that there exists in Russia a powerful body of "isolationist" opinion which believes Russia should place her trust only in her own strength. And small wonder that a literal-minded NKVD, charged with defending the security of the state, should influence foreign policy. The Kremlin makes policy, but the NKVD gives it a long, cold, hard look strictly from the security angle. For example, the security operations of the NKVD have several times directly affected Soviet policy on Poland and the mobility of Russian diplomats in various crises.

So much for the Stalin-the-dictator theory. It must, however, be mentioned that he frequently gives evidence of power that resembles that of an imperial potentate. Diplomats in Moscow said that if one went to a Vice-Commissar of the Foreign Office nothing happened. If one went to Molotov he might, after protracted argument, get a little done. But if one saw Stalin his troubles vanished. Stalin just snapped his fingers. "Stalin is always reasonable," one diplomat told me. "When I take something up with him he gives me a quick answer—yes or no. And he says yes more often than no."

Wendell Willkie wrote Stalin on behalf of a fifteen-year-old *devuska* who was in love with an American correspondent. The youngster had been living in Moscow with no visible means of support. Since she was not working, the NKVD shipped her off to live under "forced residence" at the home of an aunt about 100 miles from Moscow. I can

imagine Stalin shaking his head and shrugging his shoulders in unbelieving bewilderment. Here was the most distinguished American who had come to Russia since 1918. And the only request he made was about a fifteen-year-old girl whose contribution to the Great Patriotic War was something less than zero. Clearly, only an American could make such a request. Naturally, Stalin granted it.

Or take the case of Ambassador Harriman, who had a very delicate problem to adjust. This was after the Nazi attack on the American air bases in the Ukraine. It was obvious that unless better defensive arrangements could be instituted the much-heralded "shuttle bombing" program would have to be abandoned. Militarily, this was not too important. Psychologically and diplomatically, however, it was A-1 priority. It was the most tangible inter-allied collaboration in the West, and it was a precedent for the future—for the Pacific.

Now, the actual reason for the shambles at the Ukraine bases was the fact that the Russians did not have night fighters (except for daring young men who flew by the seat of their pants) nor radar with which to detect the approach of enemy planes. Naturally it would not be reasonable to expect the Russians to admit that this was all their fault. Yet, something had to be done.

Harriman got his opportunity when Stalin suggested that the Americans had betrayed naiveté in allowing the Germans to carry out their attack. A lesser diplomat might have argued the question, but Harriman avoided this pitfall. "There is no need to go into the question of what happened," Harriman said. "The important thing is that it should not happen again."

"Puzhalista," Stalin bowed.

"In that connection, Marshal," Harriman said, "the American Air Command has certain suggestions. They

would like to bring in some of our night fighter squadrons and also some of our radar equipment."

"*Puzhalista*," said Stalin.

Harriman wanted to be sure. The Russians had refused flatly to let us do this when the bases were set up. "*Puzhalista*" means "please" in Russian. It could mean that Stalin meant this was a fine idea or that he was requesting that the Americans carry out their program.

"Would the Marshal be so kind as to give the appropriate orders to carry out this program?" Harriman asked with no idea what Russian policy might be.

"*Puzhalista*," Stalin said, nodding to Molotov, "the order has been given."

It was the same when Eric Johnston raised with the Marshal the question of American correspondents accompanying him on a trip through Russia. Johnston brought up the question hesitantly. Stalin displayed surprise. "Would the correspondents really find that interesting?" he asked. Johnston said he was certain they would.

"But," said Stalin, "they would find nothing new. All of this is treated in the Soviet press very fully."

"Mr. Stalin," Johnston said, "that is all very second-hand. I think it would be a very great contribution if the American correspondents could see Russia at first-hand."

Stalin shrugged his shoulders.

"*Puzhalista*," he said.

"Does that mean they can go?" said Eric.

"*Puzhalista*," replied Stalin.

Eric knew very well that this permission had been sought in vain from the Foreign Commissariat.

He turned to Molotov, who was also present.

He said: "I don't know whether Mr. Molotov agrees with this."

Stalin permitted himself a faint grin.

"I always agree with Marshal Stalin," Molotov said quickly.

"Did you really think Mr. Molotov might not agree with me?" Stalin asked.

Johnston was a bit embarrassed.

"I didn't know," he said, honestly, "I had gathered the impression he might not think it was a good idea."

Stalin smiled broadly and turned to Molotov.

"Mr. Molotov always agrees with me," he said.

Exhibitions of Stalin's omnipotence are not confined to foreign diplomats. When Ilya Ehrenbourg was writing his book, "The Fall of Paris," he had some trouble with the Soviet censors, who were making a good many cuts in his manuscript. Foreign correspondents are apt to think of themselves as the sole beneficiaries of the attentions of Soviet censors. Any Russian correspondent will tell you that he has the same trouble. I have heard Russian newspapermen complain that after they sent their dispatches to Moscow the censors cut out "all the best parts" and often held them up for two or three weeks.

Ehrenbourg sent a copy of his manuscript to Stalin, largely as a courtesy but privately, no doubt, in hope of a plug. The device is not unknown to American authors. One night after Ehrenbourg had spent a particularly trying day with the censors he was working in his Moskva hotel apartment when the telephone rang. It was Stalin. He called to congratulate Ehrenbourg. He thought the manuscript was fine. They chatted a bit, and Ehrenbourg mentioned he was having difficulty with the censors. "*Interesna*," Stalin said, and went on to make a suggestion or two. After that conversation Ehrenbourg had no difficulty with the censors.

Soviet war films were tops. From the day of the German attack Russian cameramen followed the action from the front lines. Not until cameramen began to record the war

in the Pacific had anyone seen such close-action pictures of men in combat.

Some of the men who took these pictures were invited to the Kremlin one day. Stalin congratulated them and gave them medals. It was a very formal ceremony for the young men, but Stalin fired questions at the youngsters. How long had they been at the front? What fronts had they covered? How much pay did they get? Did they have enough cameras and equipment to do the job? What did they think of the propaganda pictures that had been made? How could he help them to do a better job?

The youngsters relaxed and told him all their troubles. How certain front commanders would not let them take pictures. How some pictures had been butchered by the film syndicate in Moscow. And, just as important in Russia as in the United States, how their pay for combat photography was only about half what civilian cameramen got in Alma-Ata.

Stalin listened, and when they were through, he smiled.

As of next month, he said, their pay would be boosted to the level of the civilian cameramen. And, said Stalin, if there were any more complaints—just take them to him.

There was the case of the elderly poetess. She was a woman who had made a minor reputation under the Romanovs. She was a poetess who dealt in landscapes, sentiment, and tradition. Before the Revolution she enjoyed a reputation so minor that the Revolution came and went and did not touch her. She continued to write of the snow and the birches and the pines. Her verse had no social significance. She went on writing poems. But no one published them. How she managed to survive I do not know.

Then it happened.

Stalin's daughter, Svetlana, was studying at the Moscow university. She is a bright girl and, being Stalin's daughter,

had access to a somewhat wider range of books than is available to most Russians.

One evening, or so the story goes, Stalin and his daughter were talking and he noticed on her desk a volume of poems. Svetlana said she thought the poems were excellent.

"This is the first time I have read these poems," Stalin said.

"Well," said Svetlana, "this woman has not been published since the Revolution."

"Why is that?" Stalin asked.

"I don't know," she said. "The poetry has no special social content."

Stalin thumbed through the volume and liked it. According to Moscow gossip, he telephoned the literary committee that very night. I do not know whether that is true or not. But I do know that a few months later the State Publishing House issued an anthology of her works. And several more volumes have appeared since then.

III

There is no doubt that Stalin utilizes the prestige of his position deliberately to cut red tape and get results. Some of our best corporation managers do the same thing, and so do some of our better government administrators. They find it vital to pep up the slow, cumbersome routine which is the curse of any bureaucracy, whether Russian or American.

Stalin likes to telephone and talk directly to people. This is one reason, certainly, why you will find important Soviet officials at their desks during Stalin's working hours. Those hours begin in the afternoon and run through to 4 A.M., or even later, so he has a considerable effect on the working and sleeping habits of the whole Soviet hierarchy.

Stalin's habit of night work grew up during his revolutionary days. The revolutionaries, necessarily, did much

work after dark; and midnight was a favorite hour for stealthy meetings.

The way Stalin impresses various people is significant.

I asked Father Orlemanski, the Polish-American priest from Springfield, Mass., what he thought of Stalin.

"Well, you know," he said, "I suppose you won't believe this but when Stalin was talking to me I could not help thinking to myself—there's a man who would make a good priest."

"He was trained for the priesthood," I pointed out.

"That's a fact," Orlemanski said, "and he would have made a good one."

I asked the Father if he had any trouble talking to Stalin.

"Not a bit of it," he said. "I just talked as I would to a man in my parish. He likes to crack jokes. And every time he cracked one I cracked a bigger one. Oh, he's a very nice man. I told him about the publicity that Professor Lange had been getting, and Stalin said to me, 'Yes, we know all about that. His wife has been giving statements to the papers in Chicago.' Then he said to me: 'Father, we'll show them some real publicity. Just you wait until tomorrow.' And he called in the photographers and we had our pictures taken together and the next morning it was all over page one of *Pravda* and all the other papers."

Another time, Orlemanski said, he had something he wanted to take up with Molotov. His aide telephoned the Kremlin for an appointment.

"Do you know what happened?" Orlemanski asked. "You couldn't guess. Fifteen minutes later the phone rang. It was Stalin's office. They said Stalin would see me and that I need not bother with Mr. Molotov. Any time I had anything to talk about, all I had to do was to call his office. They even gave me the number to call. Think of that!"

A few days later I talked to Prof. Oscar Lange of the

University of Chicago, who had come to Russia at the same time as Orlemanski.

"What was your personal impression of Stalin?" I asked him.

"Well," he said, "this may seem like a curious thing to say. But I was impressed with his scholarly approach to the Polish problem. He knows the background of Russo-Polish relations thoroughly. He is the sort of man who would have made a good teacher."

Not many weeks later Stalin received Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce.

I asked Mr. Johnston the same question.

"Stalin," he said, "impressed me as a good executive. He has his information at his fingertips. He knows what he wants, and he gets right to the point. He knows American production figures better than most of our own business men do. I know because knowing those figures is my business."

I asked Premier Mikolajczyk, then of the London Polish Government, what he thought of Stalin.

The blond Mikolajczyk is a slow speaker. He likes to turn a thought over in his mind carefully before putting it into words. He pondered the question, and finally said:

"Stalin knows Poland well. We get along well in our conversation. I think he is the kind of man I can do business with."

Russian impressions of Stalin are as rare as fulsome tributes are common. But they tend to confirm what these foreigners report. Only one really intimate picture of Stalin has appeared in the Soviet press. It was published in the children's magazine, *Pioneer*. Alexander Yakovlev, designer of the crack Russian fighter plane, the Yak, wrote the sketch. The only other personal account of Stalin to appear in Russia was a few paragraphs in *Pravda* by another Soviet air-

craft designer, Sergei Lavochkin, designer of the LAGG fighter. (Available evidence would indicate Stalin has worked very closely with Soviet aircraft designers for the last ten to fifteen years.)

"Stalin is plain and simple in his conversation," Yakovlev wrote. "When he speaks with you he paces around his office. When he listens to a person he never interrupts. If he asks a question and the person gives a superficial answer, he cuts in with sarcastic criticism. Many times I have been present at such a conversation. A person says to Stalin, 'Comrade Stalin, you are not allowing me enough time for this job. This work is very difficult.' Stalin replies, 'Here we speak only about difficult work. That is the reason we invited you here.' "

Yakovlev said he was shy and diffident the first time he met Stalin. "I looked at the ceiling, wondering how to answer questions," he said. Stalin said, 'Don't look at the ceiling. You won't find the answer there. Better look at me and say what you think.' Once I was uncertain whether Stalin would like the answer to a certain question, and he saw what was in my mind and said, 'Answer what you think. Don't try to tell me just things which I like. You are a specialist. You are here not for us to teach you but for you to teach us' Once Stalin said, 'If you think you are right and can tell the reasons why you are right, do not worry about what people think. Do what your head and conscience dictate.' "

Yakovlev is backed up by his fellow designer, Lavochkin, who reported that Stalin wanted him to increase the speed and range of certain planes. Lavochkin frankly told Stalin that what he wanted could not be done. They argued, and Stalin finally shrugged his shoulders in amused defeat, saying: "Well, I can't change your mind. Let's drop the question."

Like many of his famous Russian predecessors, Stalin has a Jovian anger against Russian backwardness and Russian illiteracy. "Look at what this illiterate says!" He has been known to rage on reading some document filled with errors of grammar and spelling. "But if you try to tell him about it he will whine that he is illiterate because his parents were peasants or workers. What an excuse! Our enemies don't wait to ask whether our parents are peasants or workers. Many people are very proud because they are brave. But bravery without knowledge of military technique means nothing. It is well known that the American Indians were very brave, but their bows and arrows were of no use when they met white people armed with guns."

A fairly accurate clue to Stalin's literary and artistic taste can be found in the work which receives official encouragement in Russia. In literature his taste is for the classics, particularly the Russian classics. He especially likes Chekhov and Gorki, and can quote many passages verbatim. He has read as much of James Fenimore Cooper as most Russians—which is a lot—and, like his countrymen, rates *The Deerslayer* very high among his favorites. In fact, he has a very good general knowledge of American and English literature in translation. He does not know English outside of a few phrases, although he is seeing to it that most of his top officials are learning it.

By and large his taste in literature is somewhat old-fashioned. It is pretty much that of a youngster who was growing up in the Caucasus in the 'Nineties with a good education and a family background just below the middle-class level. The same is true of his taste in drama, music and art.

The Soviet theater is not intellectually stimulating. The most exciting play which appeared during the war was an effort called "Front" by Alexander Korniechuk, the husband of the vigorous Wanda Wasilewska, founder of the

Union of Polish Patriots and a literary figure in her own right. Korniechuk's play was not exciting for intellectual content nor for dramatic form. It was purely didactic. What created excitement was the fact that he criticized middle-aged military commanders whose strategy and tactics derived from the primitive notions of the Russian civil war in which they had shone. Since such tactics had notably failed against the Germans, as in the case of Budenny, the play was a sensation. Artistically, a less stimulating work could hardly be imagined. "Front" consisted of lengthy speeches and debate over the conduct of operations. Other plays on the Moscow stage were period pieces like "The Cherry Orchard," patriotic-inspirational like "The Russians," or escapist like "It Happened One Night," done in Moscow under the title "The Road to New York."

Much the same thing was true of the cinema. The major Soviet film effort under way when I was in Russia was Sergei Eisenstein's massive filming of the life of Ivan the Terrible, now known in Russia as Ivan the Dread. Working from a new Soviet biography, Eisenstein is giving the fabulous Czar a re-interpretation, with the emphasis on his efforts to modernize his country. He is presented as a more primitive Peter the Great.

The opera repertoire is strictly classical. So is the ballet. I am no expert on ballet, but those who know assure me that Russian ballet is technically still the finest in the world, but that, creatively, it has not advanced since 1914.

In art all you have to do is walk through a Soviet gallery to see the influence of traditionalism. The walls are crowded with heroic-size, heavy-handed epic scenes from Russian history, medieval or present day. Tanks and knights in armor are displayed, cheek by jowl and twice as big as life. Portraits are photographic likenesses, and the landscapes are all "pretty." You will look in vain for the gaunt ugliness of the

Moscow slums or the barren bleakness of the Urals' workshops. The norm appears to be second-rate imitations of second-rate Paris painters of 1890-1900.

This is accompanied by an active effort to discourage experimentation in form and intellectual content. Soviet art, literature, theater and cinema are under the general direction of committees attached directly to the Council of People's Commissars. Stalin interests himself constantly in the work of the Soviet intelligentsia. He has indicated a feeling that the intelligentsia was unfairly treated in the "purge," and possibly for that reason he spends much time poking into art and literature. It is also likely that some of the conservatism of the State Committees stems from the blows struck at the intelligentsia in 1937. After all, a burned child fears the fire.

Stalin sees every Soviet feature film and newsreel before it is released. He reads most books before they are published. He reads the manuscripts of plays proposed for the repertory of the leading theaters. As with most men of his age, his taste is nostalgic. It harks back to the days when he was studying for the priesthood in Tiflis.

Part of the current Soviet trend is deliberate. Stalin is emphasizing the traditional and historical as part of a calculated war-born campaign to arouse Russian pride in Russia. Some of it, too, is the swing of the pendulum away from the excessive break with formalism which accompanied the Revolution. As one Russian painter explained it to me: "The Revolution brought a revolution in art as well as in government. Everything old was passé. There had to be new forms, new content. All formalism went into the discard. Formalism was bourgeois. Painters painted as they liked, and the more rules they broke, the better. But this went to naive extremes. In the art schools pupils no longer learned to draw. They did not learn proportion, the use of

color, perspective and form. They were given a palette and easel, and painted whatever came into their heads. You can imagine what botches they turned out. Even pupils with natural talent never learned to draw. Now the pendulum has swung back again. Students are under severe discipline. They learn by the classical methods, and any experimentation is severely frowned upon." The results are to be seen in the static paintings which clutter the Soviet galleries, and the lack of animation and imagination in Soviet posters and cartoons. Eventually, no doubt, technical standards will be fully restored and Russian art will again move forward.

In one field, certainly, Stalin's influence and his emphasis on nationalistic patriotism has been healthy. This is in the field of architecture. Russian architects of the 'Twenties and early 'Thirties evolved a false baroque which is known in Moscow as "Gorki Street" style. They borrowed a little from French Empire—always most popular in Russia—stirred in some German functional, and dabbed on a little Russian traditional. The result is ornate and tasteless.

Today all the cities of Russia-in-Europe must be rebuilt. There was a real possibility that the job would be done in "Gorki Street" style. But here Stalin's love for the old forms prevailed. He called in the state architects and said Russia's historic cities should be restored, so far as practical, in the style of their original building. Thus Sevastopol, Odessa, Kiev and Leningrad will arise again in traditional beauty.

Attempts to describe Stalin's personal life break down almost at the start, because no one really knows much about it. During the war his routine went approximately like this: He rose about noon and presumably had the customary light Russian breakfast, a glass of *chi*, bread and cheese. Sometimes he probably added a dish of herring. He ate well all through the war. So did all top-bracket Russians. This was not resented by the ordinary civilians, whose life

was much harder. The Soviet philosophy was that those who made extraordinary contributions to the state not only earned the right to extraordinary rewards, but should be maintained in a manner which would preserve and protect such prime assets of the state.

About 1 P.M. Stalin drove to the war department and conferred with the general staff. The conference customarily lasted two or three hours; sometimes longer. He then returned to his study in the Kremlin, where he had a light lunch and occupied himself with paper work until about 7 P.M. Then the main work of the day began, a succession of interviews and conferences, lasting until well after midnight. Between 11 P.M. and 1 A.M. he had his main meal of the day, and usually returned to work until 4 or 5 A.M. Frequently the final hour would be given over to another check on the military situation. If there were fresh newsreels of the front, he might go to the little theater in the Kremlin and view them sometime after midnight.

The routine was varied by state dinners, usually diplomatic dinners. These began at 10 or 11 P.M., and lasted about four hours. On such evenings Stalin's day would not end until 5 or 6 A.M.

He lived in the Kremlin in a small apartment. I do not know any foreigner who has ever seen his apartment. It is described by various sources as having from three to five rooms, but all agree that it is small. The walls of his quarters are lined with bookshelves—even the walls of the dining room.

He is a rapid worker, with great powers of concentration. He has an excellent staff, capable of synthesizing background material into briefs which he digests quickly and accurately. His callers are constantly impressed with the breadth and detail of his information. American industry and American production are special hobbies of his. He has been hammer-

ing away at the Communist Party and the Russian people for years on the necessity of studying American methods, particularly the free flow of ideas from technician to management and the adaptability of United States industry to new ideas.

His knowledge of United States industry far surpasses his understanding of the American political system, although since 1941 he has been making a special effort to study American politics. He reads translated summaries of the American press and tries hard to understand American ways, but there is no evidence that he has assimilated United States politics any more thoroughly than the average American Senator understands Russian politics.

For example, he was not aware until he met Eric Johnston that his distinguished guest was a member of the Republican Party. In the summer of 1944, he still thought of Herbert Hoover as the leader of the Republican Party, and he supposed that all Republicans must follow Hoover's line on foreign policy.

He frankly told Johnston that Russia hoped for Roosevelt's re-election and that they were doing everything they could to aid a Roosevelt victory. When Johnston assured Stalin that Russian efforts to re-elect Roosevelt would probably be a boomerang Stalin shrugged his shoulders, completely baffled.

Stalin finds it hard to understand how the American press functions. All Russians tend to see the foreign press in terms of black and white and, in their view, a startlingly large percentage of the United States press is black. Their test is whether a paper publishes news antagonistic to the Soviet Union. They regard the United States doctrine of "printing both sides of an issue" as a hypocritical device whereby an American newspaper can carry water on both shoulders.

Stalin is five feet four or five, and rather chunky. He ap-

pears more broad-shouldered than he really is under the stiff shoulder-boards of his Marshal's uniform. His shoulders actually have become rather stooped with his burden of work. He is more heavily jowled than his pictures indicate, and there are bags under his eyes. His teeth are discolored from heavy smoking of his big black pipe which he crams with Edgeworth. He probably has a twenty-year supply of Edgeworth, thanks to his American allies who discovered that it was his favorite. Fifteen years ago interviewers found Stalin's teeth pearly white, so it is probable he has neglected his dental attention because of the war. Unless you look closely you do not notice that his left arm is slightly shriveled, because the cuffs of his beige uniform are cut very long.

When he talks with a visitor he likes to doodle on a pad in front of him. The habit was first noted in 1930 and he still does it. In 1930 he used a blue pencil, and in 1945 it was a red pencil. Stalin is likely to use sarcasm rather than anger when he is displeased. There is a sharp bite to his sarcasm and he has, on occasion, succeeded in driving his barbs even under Churchill's tough hide. However, he always treated Roosevelt with deference.

Stalin's humor is robust, and when he laughs he throws back his head in a full-throated belly laugh. His manner with inferiors is fatherly and benevolent. The rare published records of Stalin in debate shows him to be patient and considerate in attempting to persuade opponents to his point of view. This consideration does not extend to inefficiency and ignorance. On such occasions Stalin is likely to cite one of his favorite moralistic examples—an old Russian tale, called "The Goops." The "Goops" were folks who lived in a certain town where they did everything backward.

Backwardness is anathema to Stalin. Like Peter before

him, he has raged at the backwardness of Russia. "The history of old Russia," he once said, "is the history of defeats due to backwardness." To pull Russia out of backwardness—that has been—after the first task of survival—the primary, the persistent, the all-embracing task of the Soviet Regime. To achieve that end, no sacrifice—whether of famine, of privation, or of blood—has seemed too great to Stalin. And few are the weapons which he has rejected in this struggle.

That was the spirit he carried into the war.

IV

When the Germans attacked Russia, Stalin was a veteran of nearly twenty years at the top of the Soviet hierarchy—a turbulent twenty years which had seen the struggle against Trotsky to confirm his seals of office, the massive and bitter battle to collectivize agriculture, the tremendous exertions of the five-year plans and the final elimination of all ideological opposition in Russia, known as the "purge." Whatever Stalin's personality had been at the start of these vast events, it is obvious that it was tempered and modified by the years of struggle.

The Stalin who spoke on the eve of the war, in March, 1939, to the eighteenth congress of the Communist Party, was a mature, confident leader. He was proud of Russia's achievements, but under no illusions as to the road to be traveled. His analysis of the international situation was sharp and realistic. He regarded war as already well advanced, having started in Ethiopia, continued through Spain and China, and being about to break out in Europe. He spoke with marked cynicism of the unavailing efforts of the Western democracies to halt the Axis. That is probably the only revision Stalin would want to make in his speech today, that and his tendency to ignore completely the role

of the United States as an active participant in world affairs. This Soviet difficulty in correctly evaluating and analyzing American policy is the bane of Russia's foreign relations. In 1939 Stalin's only mention of America was to group the United States with Britain and France in what he regarded as ineffectual and possibly cynical efforts to stop Germany and Japan without burning our fingers.

None of his words on Russia itself would have to be revised. He praised Russia's economic achievements and brought the dreamers squarely down to earth by citing facts and figures to show how far Russia lagged, comparatively, behind the capitalist countries and how fantastic it was to suppose the gap could be closed within the near future. "We require time," he said. "Yes, comrades, time. We must build new factories. We must train new cadres for industry. But this requires time—and no little time at that. We cannot outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically in two or three years. It will require rather more than that." *

Those are words which he repeats today again and again, for today even more than in 1939 Russia needs time. He went on to poke sarcasm at some of the five-year planners who thought they could catch up with the West within five or ten years. "This, of course," he said, "was sheer fantasy, if not worse."

Stalin talks with the same blunt realism today. He points out that Russia's top steel production before 1941 was 22,000,000 tons, compared with America's wartime production of about 95,000,000 tons. War cut Russia back to 12,000,000. In ten years Stalin hopes to boost the figure to a record 60,000,000; but, he points out, this figure must be more than doubled before Russia will be turning out steel at a rate comparable to that of American production. In the fabrica-

* J. V. Stalin, Report to Central Committee, 18th Congress, Communist Party, March 10, 1939.

tion of steel, he will remind you. Russia showed an equal lag. Where American prewar capacity was 6,000,000 automobiles and trucks per year, Russia's peak was 300,000. He knows the gap can not be closed within his lifetime, even though he comes from a long-lived family of Georgian mountaineers.

I never heard anyone in Russia, outside of foreigners, talk of Stalin's family life. Like all Russians, he has made his sacrifice in the war; but he is luckier than most. He has lost only one son, Jakob, born of his first wife, whom he divorced and who died in 1917. Jakob, an artillery lieutenant, was captured by the Germans at Ljosno, southeast of Vitebsk, on July 16th, 1941.

Jakob was no particular favorite of his father. The Nazis made every possible effort to turn him against Stalin for propaganda purposes, but had no luck. The best evidence indicates he died against the electrically charged wires of a Nazi concentration camp, either in suicide or driven there by the tortures of his captors. A month after he was captured, on August 16th, 1941, he was cited by his father for standing by at his artillery position "until the last shell was fired."

Stalin was married a second time—to Nadejda Alleluyeva, a couple of years after his first wife died. Of this union two children were born, Vassily, Colonel Commander of a Red Air Force fighter squadron, and Svetlana. Vassily was cited three times in Stalin orders of the day and was twice decorated for bravery. He is twenty-five years old.

Vassily's active service at the front dates from 1942. When the diplomatic corps, the Foreign Office, foreign correspondents and many Russian departments were evacuated from Moscow in the tense days of October, 1941, both Vassily and Svetlana were sent to Kuibyshev. The youngsters displayed little devotion to their studies, and after a few months they

were returned to Moscow. The Kuibyshev colony decided that Papa was not too pleased with their conduct.

Vassily joined a fighter squadron as a lieutenant and Svetlana went into Moscow University, specializing in social sciences. In the late summer of 1944 Svetlana married a fellow university student.* Gossip in Moscow was that Papa said the couple could not get married unless their marks in the University were good. Evidently the marks were satisfactory. The story was that the couple had a Crimean honeymoon, with Papa providing the car. But that is a story which no correspondent in Moscow would ever expect to verify. Nothing of the marriage ever appeared in the Soviet press. Svetlana is a shy, dark-haired girl, and is said to be her father's favorite. She is twenty-one years old.

Stalin's second wife died in 1932 of peritonitis. She is buried in the grounds of the "Young Maiden" convent under a simple white marble shaft inscribed: "Nadejda Alleluyeva from Josef Stalin."

It is widely believed that Stalin has married a third time, and that his wife is the sister of Lazar Kaganovich, Railroad and Heavy Industries Commissar. Kaganovich is the only Jewish member of the Politburo. I do not know anyone who has ever been able to confirm that report.

All Soviet officials regard the details of their personal life as something which is interesting only to themselves. None of these details are ever published in the press. When Colonel Vassily Stalin was mentioned in Stalin's orders he was never identified as Stalin's son. Despite this official disinterest in personalities, Russians are just as interested as any other human beings in such matters and, among themselves, chatter and gossip about wives and marriages and divorces just the same as the folks on Main Street.

* In December, 1945, Svetlana gave birth to a daughter, making Stalin a grandfather for the third time.

The official public attitude toward Stalin was typified in June, 1945, when the Council of People's Commissars named him "Generalissimo of the Soviet Union."

There are three newspapers of general circulation in Moscow, *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, and *Red Star*. They are the papers, respectively, of the Communist Party, the Government and the Red Army. Collectively, they are known as the "Central Newspapers." During the war these papers published editions of four sheets. On June 28th, 1945, the day of the announcement of Stalin's appointment as generalissimo, they devoted two solid pages of their four to Stalin. And some of the congratulatory messages spilled over onto the third page. The press called him "creator of our victory," "the great Stalin, Generalissimo of the Soviet Union," "the creator of the victory of the Soviet people," "the greatest among the war leaders throughout the world." A headline in *Red Star* said: "Stalin is our banner. The Red Army and the whole Soviet people sing to the glory of their war leader, the creator of victory, the great Stalin." A message from Soviet workers said: "Let us congratulate our wise leader from the depth of our souls." Another said: "Let us be worthy of our great war leader." An editorial in *Izvestia* said: "Stalin is our freedom, our happiness. There is no greater happiness than to work for the Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin . . . Glory to you, hero of heroes" Another said: "Glory to the father of our people, the teacher and leader, the creator of victory, Generalissimo of the Soviet Union, the great and beloved Stalin."

Several years ago a foreigner asked Stalin his reaction to this form of adulation. The foreigner was interested in discovering whether the statues which adorn every "park of rest and culture," the portraits which adorn every Government office and most private homes, the slavish rhetoric of the press which describes every achievement of Russia as

"Stalinist," the naming of dozens of towns, streets and factories—Stalino, Stalinsk, Stalingrad, Stalin Textile Works, Stalin Canal, Stalin auto plant, Stalin Square, ad infinitum—the attribution of every good quality to Stalin, i.e., "Stalinist energy," "Stalinist initiative," "Stalinist foresight" and the curious form of public debate in which every new proposal is justified by citations from the text of past Stalin utterances, newspaper articles, and studies of Marxist doctrine, were motivated by personal vanity.

"Look, my friend," Stalin is said to have answered in effect. "A certain amount of this sort of thing any man would find flattering. But I am just as bored as you are with the Stalin-this, Stalin-that, Stalin-the-other-thing approach. However, you must remember you are in Russia. Always in Russia there has been a symbol, for some people the Czar, and for some, God. Today those symbols are gone but the people are still here, and they have not changed. They still have the need of a figure who will personalize to them their relationship to society."

Stalin—the story goes—shrugged his shoulders. "*Puzhalista*," he said. "So it is. In time it will not be necessary. In time the results of the statues will eliminate the necessity for the statues. Today they are helping Russia to help herself. Our problems are great and we do not scoff at any aid—particularly when it comes as cheap as plaster and concrete."

I do not vouch for that statement of Stalin's, but I think that if he has ever stated his views he must have stated them in about that way. As he has said, "the logic of things is stronger than any other logic."

Stalin's strength has many facets. The greatest has always been his realism. He proved this during the war, when he did not hesitate to displace his warm and intimate friends, Voroshilov and Budenny, when he saw their minds were too

slow to adjust themselves to the realities of blitz warfare. And he has learned the virtue of utilizing the best talents in men. Neither Voroshilov nor Budenny was purged. Both were set to training troops and both, later, were brought back into valuable use, Voroshilov on the diplomatic side in the Balkans and Budenny in a liaison role in coordinating military operations.

Every Russian source proclaims Stalin as the military architect of Soviet victory against the Germans, and there seems no reason to doubt their judgment. Marshal Boris Shaposhnikov was called in as chief of staff at the start of the war. He was old and ill, and before his death he was replaced, first by Marshal Georgi Zhukov and then by Marshal Vassilevsky. The work of these men was studied intimately by the Allied military missions in Moscow. The shrewdest of these students spent some time at Vassilevsky's headquarters—after Vassilevsky had replaced Shaposhnikov and Zhukov.

"He is a very able man," this General said. "His staff work is good. His operations are excellently executed. But the fact is he is an operations man—not a planner. He can carry out a plan down to its last detail, but he does not originate the plan."

"Who lays down the plan?" I asked him.

"I don't know," the General said. "But the only person over Vassilevsky is the Old Man."

The "Old Man," so far as any one can tell, laid down the strategy and the tactics of the Russian campaign. Perhaps he did not devise every single tactic. Perhaps he did not plan every single campaign. But he was the one who gave the go-ahead signal. He was the one who would have been charged with the defeat, if Hitler had won. I think he can fairly take credit for the victory.

Stalin never believed in interfering on the spot with a

Soviet commander. His headquarters was the Kremlin, and his usual contact with the front was by telephone. But he did not restrict himself. He visited the front, personally, and especially when things were bad. He went out for a personal look when the Moscow front was at its worst. He showed up at Stalingrad before the Soviet counter-offensive. He spent nearly two months at General Army Headquarters near Smolensk before the opening of the big Russian offensive against the central group of German armies in White Russia. He popped up at many places during the critical days of the Russo-German war. But the NKVD was careful to see that he did not spend much time in any danger spots.

Ten days after the German capitulation Stalin gave a great victory party in the Kremlin. All the generals were there, all the top bosses of the home front. It was a glittering occasion. Toast followed toast until the numbers began to blur. But nothing blurred Stalin's toast. It was to the Russian people—and he spelled it with a big "R" with an inferential rebuke to some of the other nations of the Soviet Union whose record was not so good. "I toast the Russian people," he said, "because during this war they became recognized as the leading power among our peoples. Our Government has suffered many setbacks. There were moments when our position was desperate in 1941 and 1942—moments when our Army was retreating and abandoning our native villages because there was nothing else they could do. Another people might have said to us: 'You did not fulfill our expectations. Resign . . . We will set up another Government that will make peace with Germany and give us a quiet life.' But the *Russian* people did nothing of the kind. The *Russian* people believed in the Soviet Government. They took the road of sacrifice in order to ensure the rout of Germany. I say, '*Spassiba*' to the Russian people

for their confidence. I say: 'Here is to the health of the *Russian* people.' "

Some nine months before Hitler's dreams collapsed in the blood and ashes of his Chancellery bunker, I was riding a train into Moscow. Like all Russian trains, it was jam-packed. The aisles were full of standees, mostly peasant women bringing produce in to sell in the Moscow markets, and city clerks coming back from a day's work in their office or factory potato fields. At one end of the car there were three youngsters, young factory hands, I guessed by their manner, with an accordion. One pimply-faced lad was playing the accordion and his companions were improvising songs—mostly songs about the girls in the car, if their blushes were any guide.

Suddenly an old peasant woman joined the carolers. She had a gray shawl over her shoulders and a white kerchief on her head. Judging from her gaiety she had had more than one pull at the vodka bottle which bulged from the string potato bag she carried over her shoulder. She got out into the center of the aisle, curtsied, and sang to the accordion:

We Russians are dark people,
You have given us light, oh, Lenin.
We were dark people,
Now we can see . . .
Glory to Lenin.
We are dark people, we peasants,
Thanks to Stalin, the Great . . .
We were dark people,
Now we are millionaires.

The old woman drew guffaws from the crowd. She sang her song several times, making up new words for each version. A Russian friend was riding with me. I asked him

why the crowd laughed so much at the old woman. "Well," he said, "I think you can understand. She is an old peasant. The people who laughed either were peasants born or their fathers and mothers were peasants. They are 'dark people' just as she is. But this is twilight time. They are not all dark any more."

"What about her remark about Stalin making them millionaires," I asked.

He shrugged his shoulders. "You know about the peasants in the war," he said. "Look at the papers. There is that beekeeper who gives a hundred thousand rubles every year to the Red Army. And that family down in the Caucasus which contributed a million rubles. Everyone knows the peasants are making money during the war. Here in Moscow we talk about the ruble millionaires among the collective farmers. But we do not envy them. We know that the years when they were collectivized were hard years. Now they are doing very well. *Nichevo* . . . All things come out even in the end."

The genius of Stalin is no longer challenged. The only question is the definition of that genius.

When Stalin was a second-year student in the Theological Seminary at Tiflis he wrote a poem. One verse went like this:

Know that the one who fell like ashes to the ground,
Who long ago became enslaved,
Will rise more high than these great crags
Winged with bright hope.

"Very Friendly Disposed"

I

One by one the peasants took their places at the shadowy lectern. The first was a woman of sixty or so, her face lined and brown from the sun and wind. Because of the cold she had pulled an old white shawl close around her shoulders, and in one hand she held a tiny white candle about the size we put on children's birthday cakes. She held the candle close to the book so that she could see the words she was chanting—the words from the Gospel according to St. John which tell the story of Easter.

We had come to the little chapel of the Monastery of St. Panteleimon the healer through the frosty blackened-out midnight of Odessa. There were three of us, Dongulov, the warm-hearted Georgian conducting officer of the Narkomin-del, Natalia Petrovna Rene and myself. A dozen times we had stumbled over the rubble in the streets, and once Dongulov had caught Natalia as she was about to pitch into an unseen shell crater.

This was the sixteenth of April, 1944, just a week after the Germans and Romanians had been driven from Odessa, and there was still a sundown curfew on the city, enforced by partisan cavalry which clattered wildly through the streets, usually shooting first and asking questions later. Twice between the Bristol hotel and the little chapel mounted horsemen swept up onto the sidewalk, wheeling around us and demanding to see our passes. Dongulov nervously managed to assure the trigger-itchy youngsters that we were not Romanian stragglers trying to sneak out of town under cover of the inky night.

Major General Alexander Rogov, our host in Odessa, had put his blessing on our expedition, with an amused shrug of the shoulders. Anyone who wanted to go to the midnight mass, he said, was welcome. But he personally thought his time could be more usefully employed getting a good night's sleep. When Natalia, the correspondent of the International News Service, and I said we'd still like to go to the services Dongulov wearily agreed to come along with us.

First we went to the great St. Ilya cathedral. Huddled on the doorstep was an old woman with a bundle of Easter cakes clutched to her bosom. "Oy, oy," she moaned, "what am I going to do? Here are my Easter cakes I brought to be blessed. At home they are waiting for the Easter feast, but the church is closed, and there will be no Easter service until four o'clock. Oy, oy." We went from door to door, and found the old woman was right. The doors were locked and bolted, although inside we could see a faint light from the altar. "It is no matter," Dongulov said, "we will find another church."

So we finally came to the chapel of St. Panteleimon. Outside it, too, looked grim and deserted, but we could hear a low murmur within. We pushed through the door, and found ourselves in the dimly lighted entry, beyond which was a tiny chapel. Eleven candles flickered in the gloom, and the tile-floored room was chilly. About thirty persons had gathered there, most of them peasant women, a few middle-age men and four children. I noticed only two young men, but there were three pretty Ukrainian girls with red, blue and yellow scarfs over their blonde hair. Presently an ancient peasant with a ragged brown beard and crescent spectacles took up the chant. The Easter services proper would not start until 2 A.M., but it was the custom for parishioners to read from the Gospel before the priest began.

Gradually the room filled up. A succession of peasant women came in, crossing themselves, as they placed their Easter cheesecake, *pashka*, and their flour cakes, or *kulich*, beside the altar for the priest's blessing. It was quiet in the room except for the chanting of the Scripture. Once I heard what sounded within the muffled walls of the chapel like a distant volley of shots.

The *plaschanitza*, or altar, was a representation of the coffin of Christ, and on it was lying an ikon. On either side of the *plaschanitza* stood a pot of lilac-colored geraniums, and behind the altar the wall was almost covered with ikons of all shapes and sizes, each with a garland of flowers—paper flowers. As the peasants straggled in they added to the growing mound their *pashka*, *kulich*, their brightly colored Easter eggs, and other parcels of Easter food.

Three young Red Army men entered, crossing themselves like the others, and before the services began, at 2 A.M., the little room was jammed. Many of the worshippers handed ruble notes to a quiet woman attendant who wrote down their names so the priest could give them a blessing.

The attendant told me that the priest of the chapel was Father Vassely, a Romanian by birth and citizenship, who had come to Odessa with the Romanian occupation forces. Unlike many of the Romanian clergy brought into the Ukraine, the parishioner said, Father Vassely was a very religious man. He was fond of his parish, and the people liked him. Last week when the occupation forces pulled out of Odessa Father Vassely stayed behind. He hoped to stay in Odessa and become a Soviet citizen. The parish hoped this would be possible, and thought it would, too, because after the Red Army men had talked to Father Vassely they told him to go back to his chapel and carry on as usual.

Natalia and I gave the woman some money for the church, and thanked her for answering our questions. She said

Father Vassely would say a prayer for us. Then we stumbled back through the night to the Bristol, again successfully avoiding the clutches of the partisan cavalry. Each man and woman at St. Panteleimon's had violated the curfew and blackout to attend Easter service. Each had run the gantlet of the patrols. So, I thought, it was safe to assume that their devotion was deep and sincere. It seemed interesting, too, that despite the rigid curfew the Red Army had winked at the offering of midnight mass.

Back in Moscow this same night, I discovered later, there had been an astonishing spectacle. The Patriarch Sergei conducted mass in Bogoslovensky Cathedral. Thousands turned out for the services. The crowd was so vast that the militiamen could not handle it. Several persons were trampled in the crush, and the jam was so tight inside the church that half a dozen women fainted and had to be carried out. One woman broke her leg and another woman lost her shoes in the scramble, an even more serious catastrophe in wartime Russia. Nor was this throng made up merely of peasant women or elderly Russians who had tasted the "opium of the people" before the Revolution. Many were young workers, and there was a noticeable sprinkling of Red Army men and women, including some officers.

II

These incidents are typical of many which could be cited, but I do not think they provide any grounds for supposing that bolshevism has "gone religious." What has happened is that the Russian Orthodox Church, after twenty-five years of nearly total eclipse, once more is emerging into a recognized position in the state. And it is emerging because the state has found that there is a place for it, both at home and abroad, in the Soviet scheme of things.

Under the Czars the Church was an ally and weapon of

the state. At home it was employed to hold the peasants in ignorant superstition. Beyond its borders old Russia found the Church a useful instrument in furthering Slavic ambitions in the Balkans. The Orthodox faith, historically, has a long record of conflict with the Roman Catholic Church.

When the Bolsheviks came to power they found the Orthodox Church a citadel of opposition not only to Communistic power but to almost every tenet of Communist social doctrine. Communist propaganda against the Church was principally pitched on the ideological level. But the basic conflict with the Church was not so much ideological as it was political. So long as the Orthodox Church encouraged and initiated opposition to the state the Communist leadership fought it tooth and nail. Once the political power of Orthodoxy was broken the Kremlin no longer had much interest in the Church one way or the other. The Kremlin might sneer at the ignorance of a peasant who believed in God, but it had no special objection to the peasant going to a priest who concerned himself with God's business and let the state concern itself with state business. The situation was at a stalemate.

By the mid-'Twenties the Kremlin had won the political struggle, and for the next ten years it allowed the Church to stew in its own juice. The stage of active warfare against religion was over. The fight had split the Church, and the new Orthodox leaders kept their heads down and quietly worked to demonstrate that, possibly for the first time in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church, it was interested in religion rather than politics. The Church had one hole-card. This was the natural religious nature of the Russian peasant. While Soviet schools reared up new regiments of non-believers, the Church well knew that in most peasant homes and many workers' flats there were now two shrines. One was the "Lenin corner" where the portrait of Soviet

Russia's founding father was hung. The other was the "ikon corner" where candles were burned on saints' days

The Soviet Constitution of 1936 guaranteed non-interference of the state in religion, with a clause providing for the freedom of religion and the freedom of anti-religious propaganda. But it brought no change to the Church, which struggled on, sorely beset with financial difficulties, ignored rather than persecuted by the state. Then came the war. In the crisis the Government mobilized every possible social force to save the nation from the German invaders. This was the opportunity which the aging Patriarch Sergei had long awaited—a chance to show the state not only the loyalty of the Church but that it had a genuine role which it was capable of playing in the life of Russia. Immediately after the German attack the Patriarch appealed to all believers to rise up in defense of their country. The Church collected millions of rubles for the aid of the Red Army. Parish priests throughout the land prayed for the victory of the Red Army, and preached inspiration to their flocks. This brought quick acknowledgment from the Government. The official newspapers published the Patriarch's appeals. Then, the Government revealed that it was prepared to go much further. It suspended publication of the newspaper of the League of the Godless and stopped organized anti-religious propaganda.

The new trend has continued without break. In due course the Patriarch was received by Stalin. The Patriarchy was given the former German Embassy as an official residence. It received paper allotments for a rather ornate monthly journal printed on fine glossy stock. Metropolitan Nikolai of Kiev was named to the State Atrocities Commission. An astute, able man, he quickly became one of the leading members of the commission. Many difficulties over the repair and reopening of old churches vanished, and any

lingering doubt over the role of Russian Orthodoxy in the future was resolved when a special council, attached directly to the Council of People's Commissars, was named to handle relations between state and Church.

Stalin's attitude toward the Church was made plain in the Marshal's talk with Dr. Hewlett Johnson, the so-called "red" Dean of Canterbury, in the summer of 1945. Johnson frankly asked him to state his attitude toward religion, and quoted him as declaring: "Religion can not be stopped. Conscience can not be stilled. Religion is a matter of conscience, and conscience is free. Worship and religion are free."

These words were not new to Stalin. He had spoken in almost identical terms to an American priest more than a year before. And he had made almost the same remark concerning freedom of conscience to a young Soviet air designer considerably before that. Stalin went on to analyze the relationship of the Orthodox Church and the Soviet State. "The Church has its history," he said, "and we have our history. The Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church pronounced anathema on the new Soviet Government and bade the people refuse to pay taxes. We on our part were obliged to act."

He noted how close the Church had traditionally been to the Czar and how the war had acted as a catalyst, showing the Church how patriotic the Government was and showing the Government the patriotism of the Church.

This reciprocal patriotism was the theme of the first *sobor* or general consistory to be held by the Orthodox Church since the Revolution. It was convoked at Sokolniki Cathedral in January, 1945, to elect the Metropolitan Alexei of Leningrad and Novgorod as successor to Patriarch Sergei, who died in the spring of 1944.

Georgi Karpov, Chairman of the Soviet Council on Church Affairs, addressed the assembly. "All through the period of the war," he said, "the Orthodox Church has con-

tinuously taken part in the defense of the country. The Church has made many sacrifices for the motherland."

Alexei replied in similar terms, declaring that "we are praying for the Government and for him who is leading our country to victory and happiness." The formal resolution was approved "sending greetings to the Government and to the highly honored Josef Vissarionovich Stalin and our thanks to the Government for its aid to the Church."

III

War almost inevitably encourages a revival of religious belief. Few men are strong enough to look into the face of death without special faith—religious, philosophical or superstitious. The men of Russia are no exception. There is no doubt that Soviet troops, particularly those with peasant backgrounds where religious traditions have survived, have felt this need of special faith.

In some, war strengthened their belief in the Church. Others acquired curious fetishes and superstitions. They believed they would not die—if such-and-such did not happen. They would be safe if they did not look backward in battle. They would be safe if they did not think of death. They would be safe if their wives or sweethearts did not lose faith in them. This last belief was widespread in the Red Army. In letter after letter Red Army boys wrote back to their sweethearts and wives: "So long as you are faithful to me, I will not be killed."

This mood was caught by Konstantin Simenov, the playwright and poet who served during the war as a correspondent for the Army newspaper, *Red Star*. In what became Russia's favorite war poem, he wrote:

Await me and I shall return!
But you must await me with your whole heart!
Await me when the yellow rain makes you sad;

Await me when the snow is falling;
Await me when the heat is stifling;
Await me when those who wait for others have ceased
to wait . . .
Await me, and I shall return and cheat Death.

The mood of the Army was one which was not unsympathetic to the Church. There were plenty of atheists in the foxholes of Russia, but they understood how a man could feel a need for God.

The religious carpetbagging of the Nazis gave the Soviet an even more practical reason for encouraging a sturdy national church. The Nazis did not confine themselves to a propaganda line of leading a "Christian crusade against atheistic bolshevism." They brought with them into Russia a whole religious apparatus which was designed, theoretically, to appeal to the Orthodox faithful. The chief scene of the battle between the Nazi "false church" and the loyal Russian Orthodox Church was the Ukraine—a dark and bloody testing ground of many another Nazi policy. Into the Ukraine the Nazis moved a ragtag and bobtail of religious medicine men. They set up shop for the Romanians and the Romanian Orthodox Church in a region west of the Bug which was christened "Transdnistria." And they moved Ukrainian Nationalists and White Russians into that part of the Ukraine in which they retained direct control. Father Vasseli of the Uspensky Cathedral in Odessa—no relation of Father Vassely of the St. Panteleimon chapel—gave me a picture of these religious carpetbaggers.

The Patriarch Nicodemus of the Romanian Orthodox Church sent a mission of twelve priests into the Ukraine as soon as the Red Army had been forced back to the Bug. The mission, headed by one Julius Skriban, went to Tiraspol, where it issued a proclamation calling on the Russian

priests to shift allegiance from Sergei in Moscow to Nicodemus in Bucharest.

A little later Skriban and his aides, gaining confidence, moved into Odessa, laden down, as apparently were all Romanians who came to Russia, with trunkfuls of needles, thread, buttons, cheap necklaces and earrings, silk stockings and other goods for speculation and trading on the market. Judging from the well covered legs of the young ladies I saw in Odessa, the Romanian priests and businessmen did a lively business.

Skriban ousted the Metropolitan and the Bishop of Odessa, and took over several mansions for his mission. He dismissed the Russian priests from all the best parishes and forced them to fend for themselves. By bribing the Romanian hierarchy some managed to get churches in the country. Father Vasseli was shocked by Skriban's behavior. He said the Romanian traded in gold and currency and spent most of his time drinking and holding "orgies." Vasseli himself was not allowed to conduct services. Finally, said Vasseli, because of his "shameful behavior" Skriban was sent away and replaced by the Metropolitan Vissarion of Bessarabia and Chernowitz.

"Vissarion was given a reception like a Czar's," said Vasseli. "A detachment of troops turned out as his guard of honor, and he was given one of the best houses in town. But he had terrible quarrels with the Governor, Giorgi Alexinianu. Both men were extremely autocratic, and finally one day Vissarion left very quietly with one small valise in a droshky. He was a very bad man. He was always bragging how in the old days he used to write insulting letters to Stalin, and never got any answers."

Despite the behavior of the chief Romanian prelates, the religious policy apparently made progress. The Romanians opened up a good many old churches, and when the Red

Army re-entered the city there were thirty churches functioning in Odessa. All of them gave services of thanksgiving for the liberation of the city, and the priests drafted a joint telegram of congratulation to Marshal Stalin. They also sent a message to Patriarch Sergei in Moscow, asking to be allowed to return to the Russian Church; and within less than a week they had an answer back that Sergei would be pleased to name a new Metropolitan for Odessa and Kherson.

When the Russians returned to the Ukraine they did not close the churches which the Germans had re-opened. Many of the priests had fled with the retreating Nazis. Those who remained were questioned and if, as in most cases where they stayed behind, they were sincere religionists, they were allowed to keep their parishes.

The moderation displayed by the Soviet toward Nazi-encouraged religion in the Ukraine was part of a general program designed to counteract the effects of the witch's brew which the Nazis stirred up there. It was not, for example, an accident that one of the first acts of Alexei after assuming the patriarchy was to pay, for the first time in the history of his Church, an official visit to Kiev and to conduct in the great Cathedral of St. Vladimir, still roofless from German shelling, a solemn divine service. In the Ukraine the Germans left a fantastic heritage of ideological land mines and booby traps baited with ancient hatreds. The Nazis had thoroughly studied the history of this land, and few were the conflicts they failed to revive.

Under the Czars anti-Semitism had been especially encouraged in the Ukraine, dating back three hundred years when the Poles ruled the land. The Poles were Catholics, and to bait the Russian Orthodox populace they turned the Orthodox churches over to Jewish usurers who exacted an entrance fee from the faithful Russians. Czarist officials, seek-

ing to divert rising social discontent, distorted this ancient hatred into a popular outlet—the pogrom.

The Ukraine, too, had long had a nascent separatist movement, which flowered in the anarchy of 1917. Nowhere in Russia were the years from 1917 to 1921 more bloody than in the Ukraine. First, German occupation. Second, civil war. The Whites conquered the area, lost it, won it again. Many cities changed hands five or six times within a few months. Ukrainian gangs roamed the country, fighting Reds and Whites alike, despoiling the peasants and sacking villages and towns. The aftermath of these ravages was the horrible famine which took hundreds of thousands of lives, and not many years later came the fierce conflicts of the liquidation of the kulaks and collectivization of agriculture.

The Germans probed and tortured these old wounds, and opened new ones. Nowhere did the Germans engage in such massive extermination of the civilian population. Nowhere did scientific death institutes and gas wagons do a more lively business. Nowhere were more peasants and workers carted off to the slave camps of Germany. Nowhere was the program for extermination of the Jews more ruthlessly advanced. Nowhere was greater effort employed to set man against man.

The Germans found fruitful soil. Some old passions burst into flame spontaneously. In more than one Ukrainian village the peasants did not wait for the Germans to start the killing. Old kulaks paid off their scores against collective farm managers. How much of this went on, no one will ever know. But it is certain that such incidents occurred. And there were also cases where the slaughter of the Jews began before the Nazis arrived to apply their more scientific methods. Considering the dark and bloody history of the Ukraine, this is not too surprising.

Then the Nazis opened Pandora's box. They brought in

their carefully nurtured Ukraine Nationalist movement and set it up as a puppet regime. But this lasted only a few months. Before the first year of occupation had expired, the Germans had sacked the Nationalists. The Nationalists then went underground, fighting not only the Germans but also the Russians. Once again they became land pirates, much as they had been during the civil war. The Germans recruited Poles and brought them in as special police forces to fight both the Ukraine Nationalists and the Soviet underground.

When the Germans finally were driven from the land, many of the Nationalist bands were still underground. One of the first acts of the Ukraine Soviet Government was to issue a general decree of amnesty to the many dissident groups, provided they promptly acknowledged Soviet authority and turned in their arms.

Other concessions were made in recognition of disorganized and broken morale. In the big cities of the Ukraine like Odessa, Kiev, and Kharkov, where private business and trading had been resumed under German auspices, the state did not immediately suppress the small entrepreneurs. It preferred to let the small shopkeepers and restaurateurs continue their little businesses until there was time to get the complicated state trading apparatus going again.

The Nazi revival of anti-Semitism was by no means confined to the Ukraine. The reason for this was not hard to find. Before the Revolution, Russia was the cradle of virulent anti-Semitism. It is a stubborn doctrine to eradicate, and not even the best efforts of twenty-five years of Soviet education had been able to wipe out all the traces in Russian minds.

The Nazi propaganda barrage stirred familiar memories. And there was another potent factor. While many leaders of the Revolution had been Jews, they had gradually been disappearing from the top ranks of government since the

eclipse of Trotsky. Many of them had been followers of Trotsky, and had slid into oblivion along with him. More of them went in the purge. The fact that Jews were gradually disappearing from positions of prominence in government was noted by the rank and file, particularly when their attention was directed toward Jews by Nazi propaganda. Then, in the first year or so of the war, several changes were made in the special committees which run the Soviet theater, arts, literature, films, etc. Several of those displaced were Jews. Stories began to circulate in Moscow that there had been ugly incidents at the stations during the evacuation in October, 1941, when the state artists, actors and singers—well dressed and many of them Jewish—were sent out of town on special trains, while the Moscow populace camped day and night in the stations, waiting to get a train to the rear.

I never found anyone in Moscow who saw any of these "ugly incidents," and I suspect that the stories were started by German agents. I never saw anyone who had seen a German agent in Moscow, either, but it is highly unlikely the Germans had neglected to introduce operatives into Moscow when they were practically at the city's outskirts.

As to the changes among the intelligentsia, it would be hard to prove anything one way or another. One theory advanced by a Jewish friend of mine was that the Kremlin sensed the spread of German-inspired anti-Semitism among the populace, and quietly attempted to remove some Jews from prominence before the ground swell reached serious proportions.

That theory seems as sound as any other. But the fact was that the shifting of these Jews out of prominent positions was immediately seized upon by the scandal mongers—of whom Moscow has its share—as positive evidence that the Kremlin was anti-Semitic. When the Suvarov schools

were opened, it was whispered that Jewish boys would not be admitted. I visited one, and found this to be nonsense. There were many Jewish youngsters on the rolls—if anything, more Jews than would be expected on a basis of population. It was also whispered that Jews were no longer being accepted by the Foreign Office in the diplomatic training courses. I do not know whether that is true or not. Three of the Foreign Office Vice-Commissars are Jewish, but I never saw a young Jewish attaché around the place, and I had a feeling that blond Nordic types were preferred.

Whatever the truth of all this, the gossip reached a stage where openly anti-Semitic talk was bandied about in some circles of the Soviet intelligentsia in Moscow. At that point the Government stepped in. The late Alexander Shcherbakov, one of the most prominent members of the Politburo and in general charge of all propaganda, domestic, foreign, Red Army and party, made a curt speech at a meeting of the Moscow Party Central Committee. He roughly knocked together the heads of those who had been indulging in anti-Semitic talk, and made it plain that this kind of conduct had no backing whatsoever from the Kremlin. The frank talk had the desired effect, and cleared a sultry atmosphere. It was delivered in November, 1943, and when I got to Moscow a couple of months later I found only vestigial effects still evident.

One thing more—whatever may be the reason, the Jewish Church is playing no prominent part in the new alignment of Soviet policy toward religion. Possibly this is because the Jews constitute such a tiny fraction of the population, particularly since the Nazi massacres.

V

Emergence of a new role for religion within Russia cannot be divorced from Soviet concern with certain religious-

political problems which lie beyond her borders. The two, in fact, are closely connected.

While religion exerts a generalized effect upon Soviet relations with certain powers, such as the United States and the Latin American bloc, it has a more immediate and direct effect on Soviet policy in Poland, in the Balkans and in the Middle East. In Poland it is a Roman Catholic problem. In the Balkans, largely, a Russian Orthodox problem. And in the Middle East a Mohammedan one. So far as the Balkans go, the Russian Orthodox Church has merely swung back to its old role of attempting to absorb and draw into its sphere of influence the other Orthodox Christian faiths. This fits well into the Soviet policy of stabilizing the Balkan states within its orbit. The Mohammedan phase of Soviet religious policy is just beginning to emerge. It is tied closely to Russian aspirations in the Middle East. Russia has a large Moslem population in Central Asia, and these religionists are now being encouraged to establish contacts with their fellow Moslems, in Iran, Iraq, Egypt and elsewhere. Moslem seminaries in cities like Tashkent, Samarkand and Bokhara apparently are going to be re-opened.

But the most serious religious question for Russia beyond her borders is that concerning Catholicism. The Kremlin and the Vatican had been opponents long before the Bolshevik Revolution; but the coming of Bolshevism intensified the conflict. This quarrel became deadly during the Spanish civil war, when the two principals found themselves upon opposite sides of probably the most emotional conflict of a generation. What had been chronic but rather passive antipathy ripened into passionate opposition on both sides.

From the Kremlin's viewpoint the Vatican was its enemy, and Moscow believed sincerely that the Roman Church, seeing a European conflict as inevitable, had thrown its diplomatic weight into an effort to solve peacefully the quar-

rels of Germany, France and Britain by uniting the West in a common attack on Russia. Whether this Russian belief had any foundation in fact makes no difference. This was what the Russians honestly believed. The Vatican with equal sincerity believed that the Communists hoped to destroy the Church of Rome, root and branch.

When the prospect of a united front against Russia was averted (in the Soviet view) by the pact with Germany, and when Russia herself was drawn into the struggle by Hitler's attack, the quarrel with the Vatican naturally slipped into the background. But it was not far in the background. The Kremlin strategists knew the influence of the Roman Church in some of the Western countries, and notably in the United States, whose aid was urgently and desperately required. So, in modifying their general position in religion, the Kremlin had a weather eye cocked on Catholic opinion, particularly in the United States. And when they came to set up a special committee to handle the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, they also were careful to set up another committee to deal with the minority religions, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Baptist, Mohammedan, and Evangelical.

Even before the pattern of the war changed and it became evident that Germany would be defeated, the analysts of the Kremlin busied themselves in the study of the No. 1 Russian postwar problem: how to keep it from happening again. The key to their thinking was Russian security, and they had abundant evidence that the key to Russian security in western Europe was Poland. Without a strong Poland, able to match blows with Germany, or with a Poland antagonistic to Russia and willing to allow herself to be drawn into alliances with the West, it was evident that a powerful Western military engine could always be catapulted across the flat lands deep into the heart of Russia. There would and could

be no successful defense of European Russia unless Poland was its bastion.

Stalin likes to deal in the logic of facts—and the problem of a strong Poland presented certain hard facts. There was the historic conflict of Poland and Russia—at least three centuries of antagonism, which had left their mark on both sides of whatever happened to be the frontier of the moment.

That was tough enough—but Poland was also a Catholic country, a devout Catholic country, and there were plenty of Poles at hand to advise Stalin that this faith was bred deep in the fiber of the Polish peasants. And the winning of the Polish peasants was the key to the establishment of the “friendly, democratic, neighborly” Poland which Stalin must have. He had, of course, decided very early in his analysis that there must be a Poland. Probably no one in the world had had more experience than Stalin in dealing with recalcitrant peasants. He was not eager, on top of everything else, to launch a program of de-Polonizing the Polish peasants. He had received considerable first-hand evidence of the Polish-ness of Poles when the Red Army marched in and acquired eastern Poland at the time of the Nazi invasion.

Therefore, very early in the Kremlin analysis of Poland the question of the Roman Catholic Church came to the fore—and this was as difficult as all the other Polish questions. Naturally, the Kremlin and the Vatican had no diplomatic relations. Not only were they sworn enemies in European diplomacy, but the conflict had been sharpened by Russia's division of Catholic Poland with Germany. Yet, if Poland was to be a secure bastion, and if it was to remain Catholic, it was plain that there must be a rapprochement with the Catholic Church. Otherwise the Church might preach antagonism to Russia—and Poland, the bastion, would be torn asunder.

The chasm between Vatican and Kremlin was so wide and

deep that one hardly knew where to begin with the problem. There were no diplomatic relations between the two, no normal means of contact.

In Moscow there was, it was true, the American Father Leopold Braun, pastor of the Church of St. Louis. Braun was brought into Russia by Ambassador William Bullitt in 1933, and has been there ever since, because he has feared, with some reason, that if he left he would not be able to return. While Braun considered himself a quasi-apostolic representative of Moscow, the Russians did not so regard him. He had no diplomatic privileges and was treated with coolness.*

There was another possible source of contact with the Vatican. This was through some Polish parish priests who had stayed at their posts when the Red Army marched into eastern Poland, and who had come east ahead of the German blitz. They, however, were in no great numbers, they had been cut off from the Vatican since 1939, and there was some question as to their status with the Holy See. This was the situation in late 1943, when the Red Army prepared to move into Poland.

The urgency of some step toward solution of the Polish question grew every day. There was in Russia the Union of Polish Patriots, created almost single-handedly by the fiery energy of Wanda Wasilewska. With whatever material was at hand—recruits from the Poles incorporated into Russia in the Russo-Polish partition, from those Army elements which did not follow Anders out in 1942, from Poles captured in Nazi slave battalions and from Polish Communists, some of whom had long been resident in Russia—a makeshift "front" of Poles had been created. But no one knew better than the Union of Polish Patriots its limitations in appealing to the Polish masses.

* Braun was finally relieved late in 1945

The split between the Kremlin and the London Polish Government seemed almost as deep and unbridgeable as that with the Vatican—yet each day brought nearer the actual contact of the Red Army and the Poles; Poles who, it was well known, were as virulent against the Red Army as they were against the Nazis, and in many cases more so.

What to do?

There was in America an organization known as the Kosciusko League. It was headed by a raw-boned, 54-year-old priest named Stanislaus Orlemanski, born in the United States of Polish parents. He was a parish priest in Springfield, Mass. He was quite without fame except in Polish circles, where the fact that he alone of all the Catholic hierarchy had espoused the cause of Polish friendship with Russia and had gone on to organize a league to propagandize this radical idea gave him some notoriety.

I suppose this fact must have been reported to the Kremlin. That seems fairly certain, since Polish Catholic opinion in America certainly held No. 1 priority so far as Moscow was concerned. Then fate played its part. Father Orlemanski is a sincere if simple man. His first faith is in his Church. His second is in Poland. He felt that the Polish question had been almost buried beneath a barrage of partisan opinion. "I thought," he told me, "that if I could only get to talk with Polish people—with Polish Catholics—we could iron out these troubles." He explained that he was just a parish priest with a Polish community to look after. What bothered his people was Russia. Being a second-generation Pole, he thought, gave him some perspective on the problem.

This kind of thinking had led him to form the Kosciusko League, and this kind of thinking led him to go a step farther. He made inquiries through the Soviet Embassy, to see whether he might come over to Moscow and talk with the Union of Polish Patriots. He did not quite agree with

the line they were following. He felt it was too Russian. His idea was that, speaking as a second-generation Pole, he could put the Union on the right track. It was in December, 1943, or January, 1944, that Orlemanski forwarded his letter to the Soviet Embassy in Washington. He heard nothing of it for some time; and, then, suddenly, the Washington Embassy sent him an invitation from the Kremlin to come to Russia as the personal guest of Stalin.

In mid-April Father Orlemanski arrived in Moscow by airplane. It was the first time in his life he had ever flown, and the first time he had been outside the limits of continental United States. His arrival was without fanfare, but about a week later Moscow's eyes popped out at the morning papers. Splashed all over Page One were two big photographs of Stalin, Molotov and a Catholic priest, Orlemanski, in conference at the Kremlin.

Orlemanski went off for a week's visit to the units of the Polish Army, which was being whipped into shape by General Berling, and when he came back from Sumy, Jim Fleming of CBS and I went over to see him. He was staying in an ornate gilt-and-velour suite at the National Hotel, and when we came in he was just finishing dinner with three or four Poles. After they left we settled down to talk with the Father. The conversation was full of *non sequiturs*, until we discovered that the Father was quite hard of hearing.

We found him in a mood of jubilation and great self-confidence. He scoffed at any idea that the Russians were difficult to deal with. He had gotten along wonderfully with Stalin. When he first arrived he talked with Molotov. He was not too impressed with Molotov, but he thought Stalin and he understood each other. He was somewhat scornful of Prof. Oscar Lange of the University of Chicago, who had come to Moscow at the same time; he said "They have

shipped Lange up to the front so I can have the week to talk with Stalin."

But he was much interested in knowing what reaction there had been in America to the publicity about his meeting with Stalin. We told him that some supporters of the London Polish Government had attacked him.

"Has there been anything from my Bishop, from Bishop Thomas O'Leary?" he asked eagerly. We said we had heard no statement by his Bishop. He was pleased, and said he did not think his Bishop would say anything.

We asked whether Bishop O'Leary had approved his trip. "My Bishop knows where I am," he said. "I'm here as an American citizen who just happens to be a priest."

He repeated this several times, giving the inference that he had tacit approval for the trip but that since he came as a citizen rather than a priest, his Church did not have to give permission and, therefore, would not be committed by anything he did.

"I'm not important," he said. "I can take a sock on the chin, and nobody will be hurt except myself. Sometimes there are jobs that can be done by little fellows like myself, which the big men can not do."

Well, we said, what about the State Department, what did they think about his coming over?

"When Mr. Stalin invited me," Orlemanski said, "he sent a message to Mr. Roosevelt and asked him if it was all right for me to come over and, if it was, to fix it up about my passport."

From this remark, and other indications, as well as the timing of the invitation of Orlemanski it appeared not unlikely that the priest's trip actually had been discussed, if not arranged, by Roosevelt and Stalin at Tehran.

Fleming, a good lay Catholic, was skeptical of Orlemanski. So was I. "This is all very well, Father," Jim told him, "but

what are the Catholics in your parish going to think of this? How is the church going to benefit from your mission? So far as I can see you are being used by the Kremlin as window-dressing for the Soviet policy in Poland."

Orlemanski smiled in a superior way.

"Don't worry," the priest said. "I'm just a little fellow. But I'm smart, too. They can't put anything over on me. If I don't get what I want, I go back to America and tell that publicly. I have the final say."

"That's fine, Father," I said, "but what are you going to accomplish here?"

"Look," he said, "I'm not in the big league I know nothing about this diplomatic stuff. My folks were born in Poland, and they came to the United States. They worked hard. All the people in Poland have to work hard. Now for the first time maybe we have a chance to make things better in the old country. But that's going to take help. And these people know that. They need us, and they want us."

"Sure, Father," Jim said in some exasperation. "We all know that. But what are you going to take back to the folks at home?"

"Listen," said Orlemanski, "what would you say if fifty American priests came over here? Fifty priests from the United States. Suppose they came over here to give food and help to the Polish people. Would that be a good thing? Remember the Russians haven't a lot of food to give to Poland. They need us. Would you think my mission was worth while then?"

"Naturally," I said. "But will they let you do that, and will the Church send over fifty priests?"

Orlemanski was pacing the room now.

"I have talked to the Poles," he said. "I saw 9,000 Poles in Sumy. They had just been brought in from Tiraspol,

where the Red Army captured them. They are all Catholics. Poland is Catholic. The Russians know that. Stalin knows that. We have to get together on that."

"Have you talked to any of the Poles in Siberia?" I asked.

"That's not important," he said.

"Father," Jim said, "I'm a Catholic layman, and I am speaking as a Catholic layman now. What you say may be all very well. If you can get any kind of agreement with the Russians to respect the Church, you deserve all the honors. But remember—it is just your word against theirs. So far all the public has heard is your support of the Russian policy in Poland. You know that your trip has stirred up great controversy. People back home are going to say that you are being used by the Kremlin. I may believe that your mission is sincere. But you must remember that people are skeptical. They are going to ask you how you can prove that Russia does not intend to destroy the Church in Poland. It is all very well for Stalin to tell you that his intentions are friendly and peaceful. But when you go back it is just your word. If you want your mission to succeed, get Stalin to make a statement. Don't let it depend only on your word."

"That's right," I said. "Get something in writing. Then when you get back to America nobody can challenge you. You will have the proof."

At that point we got up and left. We were afraid we would make the priest late for his appointment with Stalin.

Walking back to the Metropole Jim and I both felt a little awe-stricken at the possibilities of this curious mission. Orlemanski impressed us as a devout priest, single-mindedly devoted to the ideal of settling up a Poland friendly to Russia, but completely unworldly. He was just as he described himself—a parish priest with no particular distinction. But he now was moving in what probably was the stratosphere

of diplomacy. It could not be proved, but it seemed likely that there were at least three wise and sophisticated interests involved in his trip to Moscow—the Kremlin, the White House, and, tacitly, the Vatican itself.

High stakes rode on his mission—only a few of which the unworldly Father had detected. Not the least of our worries as we pondered this dramatic situation was the fact that the Father was completely naive, so far as dealing with the press was concerned. He had started our conversation by assuring us that he could not discuss his mission in any way, and in almost the next breath he had begun to relate the most intimate details of his dealing with Stalin and Roosevelt.

"He will knock himself out the moment he hits the United States," I told Jim.

"He certainly will," Jim agreed. We walked along in silence for a few steps.

"This is the damndest thing I've seen in Russia yet," Jim said. "Do you realize that this priest might—just might, mind you—change the whole course of relations between the Church and the Communists?"

I shook my head.

"Brother," Jim said, "after this, anything is possible."

I itched to phone the Father the next morning. But I restrained myself until afternoon. Then I went over to the National and found him pacing the floor. The little trilingual Polish Major who had been assigned as his aide was on the telephone, casting worried glances at Orlemanski, as he conversed with someone in a low tone.

Orlemanski practically embraced me. He pumped my hand and put one hand on my shoulder.

"Come in, and sit down," he said. "You don't know what you have done for me. You and Mr. Fleming. You really did it. You inspired me!"

I was taken aback. Orlemanski seated me in a chair. He offered me a plate of beautiful golden apples. "You know they tell me those are very rare in Russia." He offered me a glass of red wine. I settled for an apple, because they were just as rare as he had been told.

"You can't imagine what happened," Orlemanski said, with gleaming eyes. "I saw Stalin last night. I was inspired. I was inspired by what you boys told me. I put my cards on the table. I said: 'Mr. Stalin, I have to have something in writing. I have to have some kind of statement from you to take back to America.' You know, I had never thought about it until we were talking last night."

"I'm glad we were of some help," I said, restraining an inward gasp.

"It was Mr. Fleming who made it clear to me," the Father went on. "He is a Catholic, and he knows what the Catholics think. And he was very right. When I told Stalin I had to have something in writing, he said to me: 'Father, that is a good idea. You put down in writing what you think I should say. Put it down in your own words and send it over to me, and if it is all right I will tell you.'"

I told him that was wonderful, but he should not give us any credit. That was something he had done himself.

"I haven't been to bed since then," he said. "I've been up all night working on my statement. He told me to come back to the hotel, write out what I wanted him to say, and send it back to him. Do you know it was daylight before I had the statement written; and all day I've been waiting for an answer."

I said that was easy to understand. The Kremlin worked at night. He had sent his answer over after Stalin had left to get some sleep. Now he could not expect any reply until Stalin got back to his desk. He probably would not hear until sometime during the evening.

"We had an argument about one thing," Orlemanski said. "Stalin said that when we agreed on the statement we would give it out right away. But I said, 'No, we must not do that.' I am just a parish priest. If Stalin makes a statement about the Church, it is my duty to give it to my superiors. He could not understand that. But I insisted that it must be reported to the Church first. He finally agreed. We had a real argument on that."

I congratulated his wisdom, and said I felt certain his Church would want to know what Stalin had to say before it was released to the public.

He was in a highly emotional state. Every five minutes or so he would tell his Polish aide to telephone the Kremlin and see if there was any word from Stalin. I tried, gently, to calm him by repeating my suggestion about the Kremlin's working hours. But when I left he was again putting the Polish Major on the wire to the Kremlin. At that point he was saying that if there was any trouble about the statement, he would stay on in Moscow and talk to the Kremlin again and again, until he got the matter settled.

Jim and I went out that night to Chaykovsky Hall and heard a fine concert—including the Fifth Symphony and the First Piano Concerto—and when we got back we called Orlemanski. "If you want something from me," he said, "come right over." He sounded very businesslike on the phone. So we went, with Jim grumbling that Orlemanski was getting to be more of a problem to cover than the second front. We found the Father in great excitement. There was champagne, red wine and vodka on his table. "Welcome," he said when we walked in, "welcome, my friends." We hardly had time to take off our coats before he reached in his pocket, pulled out a piece of paper and said: "Here is my statement." We hastily looked at it. It said:

"Unquestionably Marshal Stalin is the friend of the

Polish people. I will also make this historic statement, that future events will prove that he is very friendly disposed toward the Roman Catholic Church. 'Poland should not be a corridor through which the enemy passes at will and destroys Russia,' said Stalin. He really wants a strong, independent democratic Poland to protect herself against future aggressors. He has no intention of meddling in the internal affairs of Poland. All he asks for is a friendly Poland. As to religion, the religion of our forefathers shall be the religion, of the Polish people, and Marshal Stalin will not tolerate any transgressions in this regard."

There was more of it, but this was the essence.

"This is a strong statement," Fleming said. "Do you have anything to back it up?"

Orlemanski chuckled.

"That's the statement we give out here," he said. "There's only one copy for you boys, and one for the official reporter. But now comes the surprise."

Orlemanski paused dramatically and then pulled a second paper from his pocket.

"This you can see," he said. "But it's off the record until I give it to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington. Take a look at this."

We looked. It said:

"Translation of the answers of Marshal Stalin to questions by the Reverend Stanislaus Orlemanski.

"Q.—Do you think it admissible for the Soviet Government to pursue a policy of persecution and coercion with regard to the Catholic Church?

"A.—As an advocate of freedom of conscience and that of worship, I consider such a policy to be inadmissible and precluded.

"Q.—Do you think that cooperation with the Holy Father, Pope Pius Twelfth, in the matter of the struggle

against coercion and persecution of the Catholic Church is possible?

"A.—I think it possible."

The statement added that Orlemanski did not desire the statement published at the present time, but that Stalin had no objection to its publication. The statement constituted a specific pledge by Stalin against persecuting or coercing the church in Russia or elsewhere in any way. It also invited Pius to open negotiations with the Kremlin, particularly with respect to enlisting the Red Army in the fight against the enemies of the Church beyond the borders of Russia.

What Stalin had said, in effect, through the medium of the priest was that he was ready and willing to talk turkey to the Vatican; and he strongly hinted that he was willing to let bygones be bygones, if the Vatican was equally ready.

We congratulated the Father and toasted his success in champagne. We said we thought he would be warmly greeted by the Apostolic Delegate and his Bishop when he returned to America.

"Stalin was very anxious to put the statement out here," Orlemanski confided. "But I said no. I said that this was a diplomatic matter. I am just a parish priest. I can not put things out like this. This is for the Church. I told him I would take it back and give it to the Apostolic Delegate, and it would be up to him what was done with it."

We agreed with him that his course was wise. We had another glass of champagne to celebrate his success, and then Jim had a bright idea.

"Have you met Father Braun yet?" he asked.

"No," Orlemanski said, "I've just been so busy with the Kremlin. But I heard he was here. I am sorry I haven't gotten to see him."

Jim suggested that he try to arrange a meeting. Orlemanski was agreeable, so at about midnight, riding in Orleman-

ski's Kremlin limousine, we went out to the old French Embassy, where Braun made his home. As we left the National the manageress of the Hotel pulled me aside.

"You'll get him back in time for his plane, now, won't you," she said. "Remember, he has to leave at eight in the morning." I promised we would not keep the priest out all night.

The two priests acted like strange dogs.

Orlemanski strode in very brusque.

"Glad to see you, Father," he said to Braun.

"Glad to see you," said Braun. "Sorry I haven't seen you before."

"Well, Father," Orlemanski replied, "I haven't much time."

"That's too bad, Father," said Braun sharply.

Reaching into his gown, Orlemanski extracted his statement.

"Here it is," he said.

Braun was a bit taken aback. He put down the statement without reading it, and got out some glasses and poured some vodka. Then he glanced at the statement, without really reading it, and started asking Orlemanski questions.

"It's all there in the statement," Orlemanski said, a bit huffy.

Finally Braun read the statement—and his eyes popped. That ended the skirmishing. Braun proposed a toast to Orlemanski. Then Orlemanski proposed one to Braun, and after an hour's talk, in which time the two priests exchanged impressions of Russia, I left to get busy on the story.

After working all night, I dropped by the National about 6:30 A.M. I found Orlemanski and Braun. They had stayed up, talking. Orlemanski was still so excited he could not eat. There were apples and oranges on the table, and while we chatted a maid brought in two fresh pitchers of wine for

the Father's breakfast! I said goodbye to the Father and left him to catch his airplane, hoping against almost certain knowledge that he would not come a cropper when he had to face the reporters in the United States. Hardly had he landed in America when the story broke with a series of melodramatic recriminations that obscured the whole significance of his mission.

More than a year passed, and there was no visible move on either side to implement Stalin's bid for discussions. The Soviet press had opened a campaign of sniping at the Vatican nearly six months before Orlemanski's trip, and it continued the periodic drumfire. The Vatican press replied in kind. But, significantly enough, both the Red Army and the new Polish Government pursued a hands-off policy toward the Church. The policy of the Union of Polish Patriots while still in Russia had been to provide Catholic religious instruction for Polish children in Soviet-run homes. This was continued. And the policy of Catholic chaplains for the Polish Army was broadened. At the time Orlemanski was in Russia there were only five chaplains, but the Catholic Bishop of Luck, who had been swept up in the Red Army advance into eastern Poland, even then was attempting to find more priests.

In the summer of 1945 Cardinal Hlond returned to Warsaw. About the same time a Vatican official, commenting on the anti-Vatican polemics in the Soviet press, said he was not particularly concerned by them. Many people, he said, might not agree, but he felt that in a sense they were a trial balloon, designed to draw out the Vatican in order that Russia might know where the Church stood on the many questions concerning the reconstruction of postwar Europe.

By that time the election of a Labor Government in England, and the Potsdam declaration, made the fall of Franco

in Spain almost certain. It seemed that the opening up of direct Vatican-Kremlin negotiations could not much longer be delayed. For both parties the "logic of facts" was inevitable.

Russian Possibilities Are Greater

I

The sharpest and clearest analysis of Soviet economy which I have ever read was made by the man who knows it best, Josef Stalin. It was made five months before the outbreak of the European war, but the past six years have only served to underline its accuracy. Stalin was speaking to a congress of the Communist Party, and naturally he emphasized the achievements of Russia under the Revolution and, particularly, through the first two five-year plans. He cited statistics to show that Soviet industry was expanding more rapidly than that of the capitalist countries, but he put his main emphasis on the distance Russia still had to travel to bring herself up to the level of the West.

Russia, he explained, now produced more than twice as much pig iron as Great Britain, a very laudable achievement. But—"It might seem that we are better off than Great Britain. But if we divide this number of tons by the number of population we shall find that the output of pig iron per head of population in 1938 was 145 kilograms in Great Britain and only 87 in the U.S.S.R." The same, he noted, was true for steel and electric power. Russia produced almost twice as much steel and one-third more power than Britain. But on a population basis, Russia made less than half Britain's steel and only one-third as much electricity.

"The economic power of a country's industry," Stalin lectured on, "is expressed not by the volume of industrial output in general, irrespective of the size of population, but by the volume of industrial output taken in direct reference to the amount consumed per head of population. The

larger a country's industrial output per head of population, the greater is its economic power; and, conversely, the smaller the output per head of population, the less is the economic power of the country and of its industry. Consequently, the larger a country's population, the greater is the need for articles of consumption, and hence the larger should be the industrial output of the country."

Stalin spelled out his lesson in terms of pig iron. In 1938 Britain made 7,000,000 tons of pig iron and Russia 15,000,000. But to beat Britain Russia had to boost her output to 25,000,000. To top Germany's 18,000,000 tons Russia had to make 40 or 50 million tons. And to exceed the United States the Soviet would have to produce 50 or 60 million tons. And the same, he assured his audience, held true for everything made of pig iron and all the way down the production line. It was not, he emphasized, something that might be achieved overnight, and there was no point in drafting dazzling plans which could not possibly be fulfilled.

Speaking like a tough Detroit production man, he said. "When the second five-year plan was being drawn up certain members of the old personnel of the State Planning Commission proposed that the annual output of pig iron toward the end of the second five-year plan should be fixed in the amount of 60,000,000 tons. That means that they assumed the possibility of an average annual increase in pig iron production of 10,000,000 tons. "This, of course, was sheer fantasy, if not worse." He went on to say that if such "fantastic dreamers" were ignored it might be possible to boost pig iron two or two and a half million tons a year. "The industrial history of the principal capitalist countries," he said, "as well as of our country, shows that such an annual rate of increase involves a great strain—but it is quite feasible. Hence, we require time, and no little time

at that, in order to outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically." Stalin's remarks provide one of the main clues to the secret of why Russian industry was able to keep the Red Army in the field against Germany.

Russia is a country where on every side you see the evidence of backwardness in industrial development. Her civilians lack most of the conveniences which an industrial civilization produces, and many that we regard as necessities. Yet, the industry which did not turn out vacuum cleaners for the civilians kept the Red Army equipped with tanks, guns and planes.

The answer lies in Stalin's differentiation between quantity production and per capita production. On a per capita basis Russia's pig iron production was far behind that of the Western countries, but on a quantity basis it exceeded that of her chief industrial rivals in Europe, namely England and Germany. By throwing her total production behind the Red Army Russia was able to operate very nearly on a par with Germany. But there was nothing left over for civilians. And the civilians, far below the level of those of the West from the start, sank to an even lower level. Thus, the more foreign observers looked at civilian Russia the farther they were from understanding how the Red Army could stay in the field.

The war has not destroyed the realistic focus within which Stalin views Soviet industry. Eric Johnston discussed Russia's postwar industrial problems with Stalin in the summer of 1944. Stalin said that the first thing the Soviet would do once the war was over was to start a new five-year plan. * "After that," said Stalin, "we will have another five-year plan—if I live."

Johnston expressed some surprise. "I thought your people were tired of five-year plans," he said. Stalin smiled, and

* The first of these plans was announced Aug 19, 1945

launched into much the same kind of lecture to which he had treated his party comrades five years before. Soviet steel production at the outbreak of the war, he pointed out, was 22,000,000 tons. This incidentally was exactly what the third five-year plan had called for, indicating that the plan was up to quota at the time of the Nazi attack.

"Do you know what our steel production is now?" Stalin asked.

Johnston did not know (this was June, 1944).

"Today we are turning out 12,000,000 tons of steel," the Marshal said. "After two new five-year plans we hope to get it up to 60,000,000."

He added a few details of the difficulties this would entail. A good sixty per cent of Russia's steel production had been concentrated in the Donbas, the most economically favorable steel area in the Soviet. The Donbas steel complex was now a wreck. Many mills were damaged so badly that there was just no point in trying to rebuild them. It would be simpler to start new plants.

Johnston listened to the Marshal thoughtfully. Finally, he said: "You know our steel production is up to 99 million tons."

"Yes," Stalin said, "I know that. That shows you how far we have to go to catch up."

Using the index which Stalin himself applied in 1939, Russia has indeed a long way to go. Ten years from now, if the Marshal's hopes for Soviet steel production are fulfilled, Russia's production will be just one-half of that of America on a per capita basis—provided we make no increase in our rate during the next decade. And Russia will have to boost her production at a rate which Stalin regarded as fantastic in 1939.

Russia, as a nation, is just entering the steel age. She still has to construct her steel foundations—skyscrapers, steel

bridges, steel tunnels, steel-reinforced highways, steel ships, trains, busses, trucks and cars. Russian houses are yet to be crammed with steel pipes, radiators, furnaces, wires and gadgets of every description. On top of that, Russia must rebuild practically every city of Russia-in-Europe, and she has many, many factories and factory cities which must be rebuilt, re-tooled and re-equipped after wearing them to the bone producing for the war.

Stated simply, Russia's need for steel is ten or twenty times our own, and, if all goes well, in ten years she will be turning out half as much as we can make today. I think Stalin's index is a fair guide to the industrial disparity between Russia and the United States. How this breaks down in relation to things made out of steel was also emphasized by Stalin.

"Your prewar automobile capacity," he told Johnston, "was six million a year."

Johnston thought it was closer to five million, and Stalin accepted Johnston's figure. (Johnston was wrong, the Marshal was right.)

"All right," said Stalin, "do you know what our pre-war production was?"

Johnston did not know.

"Well," said the Marshal, "it was 300,000."

It was hardly necessary for Stalin to add that in order to equal American automobile production, per capita, Soviet production would have to be boosted nearly 25 times. Nor was it necessary for him to point out that the Soviet highway system was somewhat behind that of Iowa when the first bond issues were floated in 1921 to pull her out of the mud. No Soviet civilian had a car during the war—the few in civilian hands were requisitioned for the Red Army. And only top officials had government cars. Even taxicabs disappeared.

The end of the war did not affect Russia's economic goal in the slightest. It is the same today as it was when the first five-year plan was inaugurated—expansion of basic heavy industries and transportation to place Russia on a par, economically, with the principal capitalist nations of the West.

If steel is typical, the war cost Russia something like 40 per cent of her industry. But steel probably is not typical. The steel industry is one which is almost impossible to transplant. The mills are too complicated, the machinery too heavy; and it is anchored to sources of iron and coal.

Just what percentage of Soviet industry was saved by being moved east to the Urals, Central Asia and Siberia is not known. But it has been revealed that more than one million carloads of industrial equipment was evacuated between July and December, 1941.

This amazing evacuation enabled many war industries to keep up output at a level fairly close to normal. And in the reconstruction and reconversion era the migration of industry eastward is being frozen into the economic fabric of the country. Only a few unsuitable plants are being returned to their former locations. The factories are continuing on the new sites and, where possible, a second plant is being erected on the old abandoned site. Skilled personnel is divided between the mother plant and the migrant plant, and this industry is proliferating and the framework for doubling production is erected.

But even with the labor of two or three million German prisoners and the thousands of tons of equipment taken as reparations from Germany and the satellites it is a slow, grueling task to get back production. In the Donbas, for example, in the first twenty months after the area was cleared of Germans something less than 800,000 tons of steel was produced. The area turned out nearly 1,000,000 tons a month before it was wrecked by the Nazis. Nevertheless,

restoration steadily went ahead. Nine blast furnaces, twenty Martin ovens, sixteen coke batteries and fifteen laminating machines were operating, and almost as many more were expected to be running by the end of 1945.

The magnitude of the reconstruction task can be conceived only when you see the wrecked cities of Russia. Sevastopol is such a city. It may have been damaged a little more than some, because the Russians defended it under siege for many months. And there are probably some Russian cities which suffered worse destruction.

Sevastopol was a well built city. Its central section was built of heavy stone, and was able to withstand a lot of pounding. But when I saw Sevastopol a week after the Germans had been driven out, it looked like a city of the dead. Our cars poked down streets lined with debris, and in two hours I saw no building that had not been wrecked.

The Mayor, Vassily P. Yefrimov, had just returned to his town. He gave us a little buffet luncheon. The tables were spread in the open on the grounds of the famous Sevastopol cyclorama. It was an open air luncheon, because everything in Sevastopol was on an open air basis.

Yefrimov had been in Sevastopol during the siege by the Germans. He estimated that when the Russians finally pulled out, about fifteen per cent of the buildings were still standing. He guessed that three percent were left now. Judging from what I saw, he was being optimistic. But he said that of Sevastopol's 15,000 houses probably 500 could still be lived in.

Sevastopol had a population of about 100,000 before the war, and 50,000 remained when the city was lost. Yefrimov believed there were 10,000 civilians in the town when the Russians came back. I think he was over-optimistic. I saw hardly half a dozen people in all of Sevastopol. Everything that was wreckable had been wrecked. The docks and piers

were blown up, and the harbor machinery was a twisted mass of scrap iron. The water system was destroyed. So was the power plant. The few warehouses not wrecked by bombs or shells were burned out by the Germans. The only enterprises running in liberated Sevastopol were a bakery, a bathhouse and a small hospital caring for 150 patients—all started by the Red Army.

It began to rain as we talked to the mayor, and we took shelter under the portico of the cyclorama building. It appeared little damaged, but inside it was like the rest of Sevastopol—gutted. The roof was a tangle of steel girders, and on the walls Nazi soldiers had scrawled their names in chalk and had drawn schoolboys' dirty pictures.

I asked the mayor how he judged whether a building was habitable.

"If a room has three walls and a ceiling," he said, "we count it in good shape."

II

The burden of rebuilding such cities as Sevastopol falls, largely, as did the burden of production for war, upon the heavy industries of the Urals. The heart of the Urals is Magnitogorsk, jewel city of the first five-year plan. It is built around the famous magnetic mountain with proved deposits of 300 million tons of 60 per cent iron ore, and another 85 million tons of 45 per cent ore—a supply to last 500 years we were told.

No steel town is a very lovely place, and when I saw Magnitogorsk in the summer of 1944 it held true to that rule. Nor would it be accepted as a model industrial city. Over the city was a huge cloud of smoke, fed by the brown, black, white and gray plumes from the stacks of the plants. The smell of gas from the coke ovens was heavy in the air. At the back of the town was the red gash of the magnetic

mountain, and scattered over the green plain were white barracks—apartment houses, product of the five-year plans. They looked good and modern—until one got up close and saw the flaking stucco, the cracked concrete and the boarded windows where the glass had been broken. But by no means all the workers lived in the apartment houses. Thousands inhabited wooden and sod huts thrown up higgledy-piggledy between the big steel mills

There is a curious thing about Magnitogorsk. It has no main street and no civic center. It has just grown up around the mills. In Magnitogorsk's hectic history there has never been time for anything but priority jobs. The streets are paved, but there has been no labor to spare to fix the places where the concrete has buckled and broken

The night we were there we went to the theater, a pleasant, well-kept auditorium. The attraction was "The Crystal Slipper," which is the Russian version of Cinderella. It seemed to me a very appropriate choice. The audience was made up of girls and women, with a sprinkling of teen-age boys. They were the workers of the Magnitogorsk mills, and this night they wore their best dresses and, between the acts, they promenaded in the lobby, just as they do at the Bolshoi in Moscow, the girls walking around and around in a great circle, two by two. This night for a few hours they could dream of pumpkin coaches; but the clock would soon strike, and carry them back to the forges and the ore treatment plants. We foreigners were as great an attraction as the play. Whenever a joke was made on the stage every one turned to see if we got the point.

The man who ran Magnitogorsk was named Grigori Ivan Nosov, a sandy-haired, jolly-faced Russian of 38. He had run the steel works for five years, and he was doing all right. He was full of energy and ambition and enthusiasm, and he was just the sort of man who, if he had been working

for United States Steel, might have been the manager of their Gary works.

Nosov lived in a fine white stucco *datcha* half way up a green hill on the outskirts of town, well away from the smoke and grime. This was a little suburban development very similar to the kind you would find in American mill towns. The executives of the mills lived in these houses, twelve or fifteen houses on a curving paved street. Some were one-family dwellings, and some were duplexes. Each was set well back from the tree-shaded street, with high hedges, wide lawns and a plot of three-quarters of an acre to a full acre of land.

Now, the lawns were uncut and the hedges untrimmed, and the stucco was chipping off some houses. This, it was obvious, was due to the wartime shortage of labor. Nosov's lawn had been cut, doubtless in honor of our visit, and the yard was fragrant with the smell of new-mown hay. The twelve- or fourteen-room house was filled with great bouquets of newly picked peonies.

Here Nosov lived with his wife, two small sons and a daughter. Because of the war they occupied only the top floor of the house. I got the impression that some other mill executives shared the house, but of that I am not quite certain. On the ground floor there was a billiard room, and also a dormitory with half a dozen bunks. I wandered out through the victory garden. I suspect it was like the victory gardens of a good many busy executives. Nosov had managed to get his potatoes, cabbage, carrots and squash planted, and there was a tangle of raspberry bushes. But the place was grown high with weeds, and it seemed pretty obvious that Nosov was more expert at turning out steel ingots than at raising prize cabbages.

Magnitogorsk was the first stop in Eric Johnston's tour of Russia.

Johnston asked Nosov what he should call him.

"Call me *Tovarish* Nosov," he said with a grin.

Nosov is one of the crack industrial executives of Russia. He was born in the Urals, and his father was a blacksmith. He went to the Tomsk Technical Institute, and then directly into the steel industry. As an indication of his accomplishments he wore two Orders of Lenin, and also the Order of Soviet Labor. He was paid accordingly. His base pay was 3,500 rubles a month, but he got a bonus on production and profits, and this ran to not less than 10,000 rubles and more a month—about \$2,000 at the official exchange rate, or \$830 at the diplomatic rate. His house—as nice as any in Russia—and his Zis sedan went with the job. What was more important in a land where everything was scarce, Nosov got excellent rations. His salary and perquisites were typical of a man in his position.

The hospitality Nosov showed Johnston naturally was no criterion of the kind of table he set every day. But it is a fact that at his pleasant house on the hill I ate the best breakfast I had in Russia—three cups of excellent coffee, good bread, butter, apricot jam, cheese, three fried eggs and sweet roll. It was good.

Nosov's youngsters looked like the children of a successful executive. His little eight-year-old daughter wore a bright pink dress and rode a bicycle, one of the few I saw in Russia, around the back yard. His five-year-old boy was brown as a berry and jolly as a cub. The older boy, an eleven-year-old, was not in evidence. Neither was Mrs. Nosov.

Nosov was frankly boastful of Magnitogorsk. The first of its blast furnaces was started in 1930, and No. 6 was blown in on November 1, 1943. Work on No. 7 had started, but was still in progress in August, 1945. He had 45,000 production workers, and 20,000 working on construction. "The whole construction will be completed in 1948," he

said. "It will then be the largest steel works in the world. Gary was started in 1911 and finished in 1943. We will finish Magnitogorsk in 1948, a little more than half the time taken to build Gary."

He wanted us to know, too, that in spite of the help from America the bulk of Russia's steel came from her own mills. And, as for the future, well: "Russian possibilities are greater than those of the United States. The Kuzbas in Siberia has ten times more coal than the Donbas." We chuckled, and toasted the future of Russian steel production.

The workers at Magnitogorsk, as at most heavy industrial plants, earned an average of 800 to 1,000 rubles a month, including premium and incentive pay but not overtime. (A thousand rubles is \$200 at the official rate or \$83 at the diplomatic rate). They worked a basic eleven-hour day, except for those under 18, but received time-and-a-half for more than eight hours work. They worked a six-day week, and on the seventh day contributed labor to the factory farm. Skilled workers earned up to 2,000 or 2,500 rubles—\$500 at the official rate, or \$200 at the diplomatic rate.

There was an elaborate scale of incentive pay. The workers' pay rose in proportion to output. This was backed up by propaganda, "socialist emulation," stakhonovite drives, patriotic appeals, banners for workers who exceeded their "norm," wall posters, honor rolls and every possible device to inspire higher production. It was an organized, calculated speed-up and stretch-out system which was justified and accepted by the workers because of the gravity of the needs of the country.

The plants operated on a 24-hour 7-day week—and looked it. It was obvious that the labor force was strained to the utmost to maintain production and had no time for anything more than the barest minimum of maintenance. The floors of the mills were cluttered with odds and ends of

machinery, and roofs let the rain through in great puddles that made some sections of the mills almost like indoor lakes. But, whatever the handicaps, the flow of steel to the Red Army went on.

I think that all of us were shocked by some of the conditions under which the Soviet workers toiled. There was one shell plant in particular, located in a murky basement lighted only by low-wattage bulbs and almost hip-deep in twisted blue-and-green steel shavings from the shell casings. Here hundreds of white-faced girls, many not more than 13 or 14, toiled at the lathes. You could see that the management did not want to halt production for even a few hours to clean out the plant. Here as elsewhere I felt that this was short-sighted. It seemed obvious that these youngsters could boost production probably fifty per cent if the plant were swept out and kept swept out, and given decent lighting and ventilation.

"American workers would not work in plants like these," Johnston commented after seeing several of them. I agreed with him. The shell factory was the most depressing sight I saw in industrial Russia, and the least necessary.

I am not an industrial expert, and I do not know to what extent Magnitogorsk has been overworked during the war. I do not know, for example, how much damage can be done to a blast furnace by not shutting down for overhaul, nor how frequently coke ovens should be cleaned. But the evidence I saw in the Urals was that to maintain production they had run the machines until they broke down. Often they remained out of use indefinitely, because skilled labor could not be spared for overhaul and repair. In half a dozen heavy industrial plants the number of idle machines, either not yet installed or out of production awaiting repairs, appeared to Johnston to be higher than what you would expect in an American plant.

It is possible that this could not be helped—that volume had to be maintained by running the machines to death. But maintenance is a natural weakness in the Soviet industrial setup, and I had the feeling that many Soviet industrial managers would have turned in higher annual production at lower labor cost if they had devoted more attention to maintenance.

Johnston turned up an example of this at a brick factory in Magnitogorsk. This happens to be a field in which Johnston is an expert, because he operates five brick factories on the Pacific Coast. The Russian factory had 850 workers and an average production of 8,500 tons per month—some 1,400,000 bricks. That is an average of ten tons of bricks per man per month. Johnston's men turn out thirty tons per man per month.

Our trip uncovered another direct comparison of the relative efficiency of American and Russian production. This was at the Douglas plant in Tashkent, which produces the DC-3 transport plane under license. This plant began operation in 1939 in Moscow, and was evacuated to Tashkent in November, 1941. Thirty-five days later the plant had been set up in some old airport hangars and was turning out airplanes—truly a remarkable feat.

This plant employed about 14,000 persons in direct production, and made an average of five to six planes per day. Working out a rough calculation that Willow Run made twenty-five four-engined bombers daily compared to Tashkent's six two-engined transports, and that Willow Run employed 68,000 workers against Tashkent's 14,000, Johnston estimated that Willow Run was slightly more than 100 per cent more efficient than Tashkent. Actually, this was not a very fair comparison since it made no allowance for the tremendous difficulties which the Russians had to overcome to keep the Douglas plant producing at all.

Both at Tashkent and Magnitogorsk the great problem was to maintain production at a high enough level to meet the urgent demand of war orders. But the Soviet system did not relieve a manager of responsibility for operating at a profit. Nosov frankly admitted that as late as 1939 Magnitogorsk was still running in the red, with the state absorbing the loss in order to get the steel industry going. The first profit was marked up in 1943, when the mills went into the black by 25,000,000 gold rubles—about \$5,000,000. Nosov hoped in 1944 to make a profit of \$10,000,000 on a production volume of \$240,000,000, and considered this a very low profit rate. (It was a little more than four per cent on his turnover) In 1944 he was producing steel at a cost of 230 gold rubles per ton—about \$46.* The plant figured depreciation on a twenty-year basis, and it was hoped that profits would amortize the investment over that period.

Wherever we went in Russia we found the factory managers worrying not only about increasing production but about getting their plants to run at a profit. Because so many plants had been evacuated or turned to special war uses, a good many had gone into the red deeply in 1942 and 1943; but they expected to show a surplus in 1944 and 1945.

The workers in the Soviet plants were young, and a high percentage were women. At Magnitogorsk the average age was 32, and 45 per cent were women. At the big Uralmach works, a heavy machine tool plant in production long before the war, the average age was 24, and 35 per cent were women. However, twenty per cent of the workers were skilled veterans of more than ten years' experience. These workers were exempt from the draft, although a great many had volunteered nonetheless. In the big Artillery Plant No. 9 at Sverdlovsk the workers were 30 to 32 years old, and 30

* The American composite steel price is \$48.80 per ton. This indicates a production cost almost identical with that at Magnitogorsk.

per cent were women; this percentage had doubled since the war. In most plants the numbers of women had increased even more. At a tank factory in Omsk the percentage of women workers was 40. At an optical works in Novosibersk it was 70, and at a Tashkent textile mill 80 per cent were females.

III

The men running these factories invariably were in their thirties or early forties. At Sverdlovsk we asked Lev Gonor, the 36-year-old director of Artillery Plant No. 9, why all Soviet plant managers were so young. Gonor, a cocky pint-sized manager who wore the ribbon of the Hero of Socialist Labor, said that the older industrial executives were in the state trusts in general charge of the industries. The men who actually ran the plants, like himself, held a position similar to the vice-president in charge of operations of an American corporation. The state trusts in Moscow ran the industries much like the boards of directors of American corporations. With few exceptions the young plant managers had come up through the ranks, usually graduating from Soviet technical institutes, going into the mills to learn production first-hand and rising, presumably, through superior energy, ambition and ability.

As with their American counterparts, the primary task of those plant managers was to get results. The manager of the Douglas plant in Tashkent, Afanansy M. Yarunin, a forty-year-old engineer who had been head of the factory since it was built in Moscow, made this clear. We asked him about his production problems. He shook his head. He had plenty of problems, it seemed, principally the fact that his sources of supply were so scattered that materials arrived irregularly, making it difficult to maintain a smooth production line. His chief shortage was of aluminum (the Russians

lost almost all their aluminum production when the Germans overran the Ukraine). "America could help us by sending more aluminum," he said, wistfully. Then he hastened to add that he probably should not have mentioned this.

"It is not for me to say," he said. "I don't know how much aluminum Russia is getting. It is up to Moscow to allocate the supply. I have no way of knowing the needs of the other factories, and perhaps you are sending all the aluminum you can. All I know is that I could use more if Moscow would send it to me."

Up at the top, among the heads of the state trusts and the various industrial commissariats, there goes on, of course, exactly the kind of competition for raw materials, labor and priorities that harassed the WPB in Washington during wartime. Each top executive considers his industry and his plans the most important. Marshal Stalin, like the American President, devotes a good deal of time to settling arguments among his lieutenants as to which project shall have priority among a dozen pressing proposals. And, human nature being what it is, I have heard of instances in which important projects were delayed by intramural quarrels and friction.

American oilmen are not very impartial witnesses on Russia, since they usually have rather full sets of prejudices, but there is little reason to doubt their account of how bureaucratic jealousy delayed the erection in Russia of the dismantled oil refinery which the late President Roosevelt sent to the Soviet. The equipment was shipped to Russia only after an epic tussle within the United States bureaucracy. Once it got to Russia, the plant was delayed even longer by the disputes and squabbles of the Russian bureaucrats.

The common denominator of the young executives who run Soviet industry is energy and know-how. They have come up from the ranks, and they usually have good technical background. They have the drive and kinetic ability

to push ahead against the dull weight of government machinery.

What kind of a world do these men dream of? It is always dangerous to talk of men's dreams, but there was a pattern which emerged in all my talks with Russian mayors and factory executives from Odessa to Omsk.

In Magnitogorsk they said: "After the war we hope to offer our workers much better living conditions. We hope that they will have their own homes. They will have their own gardens—during the war we raised tomatoes in the Urals for the first time. We never knew we could do that before. We hope to build many new houses. We will have better street cars and better roads."

In Sverdlovsk they said: "How can we get samples of American consumer goods? We want to see the gadgets that you are making in your factories. We would like to have an exhibition here of all the things you make, so that everyone in the Urals can come and get new ideas." When Johnston told them that such an exhibit would fill a building two blocks long, they listened in delighted awe.

In Omsk it was the same. The officials wanted to make their city so attractive in the way of housing, food and conveniences that the evacuated workers would be happy to stay on there. Novosibirsk had grown into a metropolis during the war, and its postwar plan was to become a metropolitan city, the equal of Leningrad or Moscow. In Central Asia the air hummed with grandiose plans for putting more land under irrigation and boosting production with cheap hydroelectric power. And the textile executives boasted that they could make better and cheaper textiles than the British, and that after the war they could take the British markets away.

The kind of country the Russians dreamed of was a land of great industry and great agriculture, of better houses,

better roads, better cities, easier living. They were dreaming of a land which physically would look very like the United States. But they were realistic enough to know that this could not be attained overnight. The years immediately after the war, they knew, would be years of the same grim toil they had known ever since the Revolution. But over the next rise of hills, possibly ten years ahead, they thought they could see the promise of better times.

What these dreams and hopes spelled out in the way of trade between Russia and the United States, they were not quite sure. They felt perhaps that it depended more on the United States than on Russia. Russia wanted and needed almost everything which American factories made. Particularly, as Stalin told Johnston, Russia wanted and needed machinery, machine tools, steel mills, mining machinery, oil refineries—all the primary means of production. For a few years, said Stalin, Russia would require consumer goods, too. But rather than buy finished shoes in quantity he would prefer to sink most of Russia's money into shoe-making machinery so she could manufacture her own shoes.

Russia had these great needs. But trade was a two-way street. She had to have billions in capital equipment—American capital goods, if she could get them. But this meant credits at first, and later she would have to sell to us if she was to continue to buy in the American market

IV

Behind the driving managers of Soviet industry stand the local leaders of the Communist Party. They are the coordinators and often the mainspring of the drive and energy which boosts Soviet industry over sometimes seemingly impossible hurdles. The most impressive of these leaders whom I met in Russia was Mike Kalugin. His name was Mihail V. Kalugin, but a succession of American visitors to Novosi-

birsk had christened him Mike. Mike knew his name in English. He knew "okay," "hello," "goodbye," "damn," and not much more—but he got along all right.

I did not know who Mike was when we arrived at the *datcha* of the Communist Party at Novosibirsk. We had ridden several miles from the airdrome, across a country winy with the smell of wildflowers, up to a beautiful white villa built on the high bank of the River Ob, which my Baedeker said, was the fourth longest river in the world. The *datcha* had been built by one of the Russian merchant princes who had established fur trading outposts there a century or more ago and, so far as you could tell from the heavy dark furniture, thick tapestries and gold plate, it had passed intact into the hands of the new rulers of Russia.

Just outside the *datcha* in a grove of pine trees there was a volleyball court which Johnston spotted as soon as we drove up, hot and tired from a strenuous program of banquets and travel. Johnston is a volleyball enthusiast.

"Boys," he said, "let's have a shower and then challenge the Russians to a game."

It appeared that nothing would suit the Russians better. Volleyball is a great favorite with them. Once we got onto the court they revealed that only a couple of weeks before Henry Wallace had been there. And it seemed that Wallace and one of the Russians, a little wiry fellow named Kalugin, had beaten a crack Russian team.

We turned out to be a very poor substitute for Henry Wallace. Outside of Eric and Bob Magidoff none of us rated as even fair players. The Russians were all over the court. They won the first game before we were even warmed up. We also had umpire trouble. One of the Russians umpired. He called every close point against us, and he also miscalled the score in favor of the home team. At first we thought this was funny. Then we got mad—after all, we

were having enough trouble without losing a point every time the umpire sang out the score. We started to protest, but Dick Lauterbach cautioned against this. He said that it was regarded as very bad taste to argue against an umpire's ruling in Russia. So we sweated it out. Finally, the umpire's rulings got so grotesque that our opponents could see we were angry. They spoke to the umpire, but with no effect. We played six games, and won two.

That night we sat down to the most elaborate banquet I have ever eaten. It was served on beautiful china and heavily encrusted silver. The long table sagged under huge platters of whole wild roast turkeys, whole suckling pigs in jelly, sturgeon and salmon in jelly, roast wild duck, baked geese, skyscraper layer cakes, mounds of fruit, cut-glass pitchers of vodka, bottles of red and white wine, buckets of iced champagne and probably every kind of hors d'oeuvre known to man. I would not pretend to recite the menu. But there was one. It was bound in leather and it took four pages to list everything we had.

When we sat down that night we learned who our host was. It was the wiry little volleyball player who had teamed up with Henry Wallace, and his name was Mike Kalugin.

While we ate, there was music—provided, we quickly learned, by the Leningrad String Quartet, which had been evacuated to Novosibirsk.

We drank several toasts and ate more than our fill, and then Mike suggested that we go for a boat ride. It was about seven o'clock, and it sounded wonderful. At that time of the year in this northern latitude, of course, it did not get dark until nearly midnight.

Outside the *datcha* there was a little pavilion on the river bank, and here we found a Red Army concert band. They played several numbers, and we went down a long flight of wooden steps to a beautiful excursion steamer, the *N. Tik-*

henov, drawn up at the wharf. In the saloon banquet tables were spread—a second banquet. I am afraid we paid little attention to it.

Black woodsmoke puffed from the steamer's high stacks, and we swung out on the broad stretch of water. The sun shone gloriously, and the smell of the birch and pine forests carried across the muddy water. We turned upstream, and could see by our slow progress how swift the current was as the river raced between the low lying islands.

Now a Red Army chorus set out to entertain us. They donned purple-and-yellow blouses and broke into wild folk dances. They sang the loveliest of Russian folk songs, "Stary Baikal"—Glorious Sea, Holy Baikal. It is a majestic song which seemed to me to hold the spirit of these frontier people with their vast spaces and their great inland seas. Then they sang "Polyushko-Pole"—Green Meadows, the song of Siberia, the song which the forty Siberian divisions sang when they marched through the snows of Moscow to save the Soviet capital in the counteroffensive of December, 1941—the song which forty more Siberian divisions sang when they trudged into action to save Stalingrad a year later.

As the young voices sounded rich and mellow across the Siberian waters, I could feel my blood stir. Here was a people—a fierce, wild people that had little to do with the cowed, plodding crowds of Moscow. It was a pioneer people that was used to tracking the open forest and sloughing through the winter snows. It was a people to whom danger and hardship were companions, and to whom the future lay bright beyond the horizon of lake and forest. "This is the Russia," I thought, "which saved the Soviet in its greatest peril, and this is the Russia which will inherit the future."

We cruised up the river. Black smoke poured from the high funnel, and the shores of the river were tangles of

birch and ash and pine. On the top deck the Siberian youngsters sang and danced. I thought of the Ohio and the Mississippi and the Missouri seventy-five years ago when American eyes were opening to the same dream and the American future lay on the continent like a promise.

The sun colored the muddy waters with specks of gold and crimson, and the cottonwood and birch trees shone in the glistening rays. Over the quiet rushing waters surged the song of the Red Army boys . . . green meadows . . . green meadows . . . Behind the cottonwoods lay the more forbidding shadows of the pine forests—the forests that extended three thousand miles to the east and three thousand miles to the west. I thought of the Germans at Stalingrad—the Germans who had fought two thousand miles east from Berlin to the banks of the Volga, and who found two thousand miles had brought them only to the endless snow and cold of the Russian winter. And what lay before them? Endless thousands of miles of forest and snow and cold and, then, out of that mystery of snow and cold, came the Siberian divisions—the Siberian divisions singing of Green Meadows. Small wonder the Sixth German Army had failed. They might have gone on three thousand miles more, and still out of the forests would have come these men of the winter, singing their song. Von Paulus's men had been told they were fighting for living space. Hitler had dreamed of living space, but it had been a tiny, puerile dream against the reality. Here in Siberia was the reality of living space—enough space so that tomorrow could bring a new horizon to any man who coveted new horizons. On Mike Kalugin's Ob river it was hard to worry lest the Russians wanted some of Europe's crowded acres. For here was a land where a man could draw a breath. Here was more living space than any man had seen since the days of the Oregon Trail.

I turned back from the rail to look at what was going on.

There was now an old man, a comedian, cavorting in a cook's high cap and white apron. He was singing a funny song, apparently, from the laughs of the Russians. A song about cooking Hitler's goose. Then there were Cossack sword dances, breathless, heart-catching dances with the bright sabers swirling through the air like danger—just as the Russians had danced to the sword a hundred, two hundred years before.

I thought then, as I have often thought since, that a revolution can change a government or an economic system. It can make people do business in a different way. It can change the ownership of property, and build factories where there had been open fields. But it cannot change a people . . . not their mores . . . not their culture . . . not their way of thinking . . . laughing . . . dancing . . . At least not in a mere generation. The fur prince whose *datcha* we occupied would have entertained us just as we now were being entertained. But he would not have had a Red Army orchestra, a Red Army chorus, Red Army dancers and the Leningrad string quartet at his beck and call.

But Mike Kalugin could. Mike was the boss of Siberia. Probably he could keep the Leningrad quartet in Novosibirsk indefinitely. And if he did the decision would be based not on what the four artists wanted to do, but on what was best for Russia's total cultural and social development—with special reference to Siberia. Offhand, it did not seem likely that the Leningrad artists would be seeing Chaykovsky Hall or the River Neva very soon.

As the sun sank lower and the long, long Arctic shadows slanted over the boat, Kalugin moved to the center of the stage. In the gathering dusk he pulled a star shell pistol from his pocket, pointed it to the sky and lobbed up a green rocket. It burst with a fiery train of sparks. He handed the heavy gun to Johnston.

"Mee-ster Johnson," he said, "*puzhalista*."

Johnston fired, and his shot arched over the water toward a thicket on the shore. For twenty minutes Mike loaded the gun, again and again, insisting that Mee-ster Johnston fire it. Johnston tried to pass the gun on to someone else, but Kalugin with an imperious gesture insisted that Johnston fire it. Other Russians pulled out their pistols, and as the sun died out and the first stars appeared, the heavens over the Ob were peppered with the gold and red and green flashes of the rockets. "Salut!" Mike said each time the gun went off. It was not until we got to the *datcha* that we found Eric had cut the flesh of his hand the first time he fired the gun, and the "Salut!" had been a very painful performance.

It is a little hard to catch the color of Mike. He was built like a welterweight. Bill White christened him Jimmy Cagney, and the name fitted—Mike had the same tough mug, ready smile and cocky swagger. He was the boss of Novosibirsk, and no mistaking it. One night he told us he was the boss of Siberia. I think he was bragging a little, but he acted like it. He behaved more like the boss of a tough democratic precinct in some old Irish district of New York than the leader of the Communist Party of Novosibirsk oblast.

Mike said he was 44, but he looked a hard-boiled 32. Once he said he was of peasant stock, born in Moscow province, and that he went to work in the Moscow factories at 14. Another time he said he was a Cossack. I do not know which version was correct. He went to an agricultural school, apparently after the Revolution, and thought for a while that he would be an agronomist. During the civil war, he said, he fought for the Revolution in White Russia. He did not join the Communist Party until 1928. His first important job was as party secretary at Slutsk. Then he became vice-

premier of White Russia. For the last eight years he has been party secretary of the Novosibirsk oblast. This is obviously an important position, and Kalugin is well up the party ladder. He is a first vice-president of the Soviet Council of Nationalities. And in the Supreme Soviet he represents a White Russian district. He has the Order of Lenin and two Orders of the Red Banner. He is married, and at the time we were his guests his son was studying to be a fighter pilot.

Those are the raw facts.

But Kalugin is also the guy who led all the songs at the banquets, who danced with the prettiest girls, who chucked the youngsters in the factories under the chin and told Anna and Mary that it was time they got into the Communist Youth Organization. He is the one who got up after a grueling day of factory inspections and showed the young workers at the Optical plant how to do their folk dances. And he is the man who went down like a hero under a drumfire of *katuyshas*.

The *katuysha* is an invention of the American correspondents in Russia. It consists of a stout jigger of vodka in a glass of champagne. Mike had never heard of it when a correspondent proposed that he make its acquaintance. Mike had been drinking his share of *do adnas*, and he was game for anything.

The correspondent took a couple of champagne glasses—the deep-throated kind with hollow stems. He poured in a healthy slug of vodka, filled the glasses to the brim with champagne, and the pair drank, *do adna*.

“Another,” Mike said as they clanked their glasses down.

The correspondent filled 'em up, and again the potion was drunk at a single swallow.

“Another,” said Mike.

The correspondent looked at us fearfully.

"Wow," he said. "This is murder!"

Slowly he filled the glasses for the third time. And they were downed at a gulp.

"Another," said Mike, standing as firm as the Red Army at Stalingrad. The correspondent looked at us wildly.

"You gotta do it," we told him. "It's a point of honor."

Slowly he measured out the fourth *katuysha*. The drink had gone down so fast that neither contestant showed any effects, but we understood how our colleague felt. All of us had drunk a *katuysha* or two. We called them *katuysha* because they were an anti-personnel weapon.

Down went the fourth *katuysha*, and there was a breathless pause—would Mike demand a fifth? We watched him anxiously, and then saw the faint glassy film on his eyes. Mike was out on his feet. Our man was still hale and hearty—though not for long, we feared. The Russians had watched this performance with awe and alarm. Now they rushed up to congratulate our correspondent and to rescue their leader, who was staggering under the alcoholic body blows. We felt a glow of pride in our man's accomplishment. Ever since we had come to Russia we had seen our best men go down under the deadly Russian *do adna* attacks. Now the score was somewhat evened.

Three or four *blondinkas* went to work on Kalugin. They made him drink hot tea, and finally one of them took him out to walk along the river bank and brought him back half an hour later greatly renewed and in much better shape. Our hero, unfortunately, was so elated by his triumph that he cast caution to the winds and quickly knocked himself out by toasting his victory in half a dozen *do adnas*.

The next day Mike gave our colleague the cold shivers by proposing another *katuysha*. But after drinking one, he grinned, shook hands and went back to his seat. He was just teasing.

But he was not teasing when he gave Johnston a pailful of "rocks." This happened the afternoon before we were to leave Novosibirsk. Johnston was resting in his suite with Joyce O'Hara, his assistant. Kalugin suddenly appeared with Vassily Kirilov, the Foreign Trade Commissariat man, in tow to act as interpreter. Mike said he had something he wanted to give Eric as a memento of his stay in Novosibirsk, and tossed down on the red plush table a big envelope.

Eric opened the envelope and found, inside, a series of packets. He ripped one open and tossed onto the table a handful of diamonds. He opened another and out poured rubies. From another came emeralds. From another topazes—and so on. Later on when he counted them there were, I think, fifty-four different gems, precious and semiprecious.

Johnston was so taken aback that for once in his life he hardly knew what to say. He thanked Kalugin, but said that Mike should not have done this—he could not accept such a lavish gift.

Mike flared up.

"Well," Mike said, with Kirilov translating in some embarrassment, "I sized you up. I figured out how important a person you were. I have all the wealth of Siberia at my command, and I thought that this was an appropriate gift for you."

"But," sputtered Eric, "you have given me a small fortune. I simply can't take it."

Mike became deadly in his sarcasm.

"I thought these Urals stones were good enough for you," Mike snapped. "Maybe I am wrong. Maybe I made a mistake and you think that they aren't good enough for you."

"It's not that," persisted Johnston, "it is just that it is too much of a gift. I appreciate the honor—but you must take them back."

Mike affected not to understand.

"Maybe you don't like these stones," he said. "Well, I don't care what you do with them. You can throw them out of your airplane, or you can chuck them in the ocean. But you can't give them back to me."

With that he strode out of the room. Kirolov followed at a lope.

"What do we do now?" Eric asked.

"I dunno," said Joyce, hanging his head. "But you can't keep the rocks."

They discussed the dilemma, and finally decided that during the evening Eric would get together with Mike and have a heart-to-heart talk with him and try to give back the stones.

That night there was the usual big banquet and the usual toasts. Then, Mike got up. He said he had had an "inspiration." It was, he said, a sad and bitter thing to say farewell to a friend (we were leaving in the morning) That was natural. But it was particularly sad and bitter when you were good friends and if, after being good friends, you parted and your friend *betrayed* you. Magidoff was translating. When he came to that sentence, he paused and translated word for word. Later on he said he had never translated with such great care. The room was deathly still. Mike continued to talk. But what he said was not important. He had made his point, and it was a direct challenge to Johnston. Mike said something about how when the Soviet Union was betrayed it knew how to deal with such cases. Finally he sat down. There was a breathless pause. I was sitting next to Johnston.

"I better reply to that, don't you think?" he said.

"You certainly had," I said. "Give them both barrels."

Johnston got up. He spoke slowly and carefully. He repeated the main points of the sensational address he had made at a banquet given him when he arrived in Russia. He said he was a friend of Russia. That he believed in co-

operation between Russia and the United States. He believed in trade between the two countries. He believed in long-term credits. He was going back to America and tell this to American business. But this did not mean that he agreed with everything in Russia. This did not mean he wanted the Soviet system in America. On the other hand, Russia was entitled to the form of government she wanted. But one thing was important. He reserved the right to criticize Russia, and no one should be under any false impressions. When he went back to America he would speak his mind just as he had spoken it in Russia. He spoke for nearly half an hour, and before he was off his feet Mike was toasting him furiously and doing everything he could to restore some gaiety to the evening.

A little while later, Eric called Mike upstairs for a second conference about the jewels. The conference went very badly. Neither Mike nor Eric was in very good temper after the banquet incident.

"This is very embarrassing," Johnston told Kalugin. "I appreciate the thought behind your gift, but I can not accept it. This present is too valuable."

Mike said huffily that he would not even discuss the return of the gift. That the jewels now belonged to Johnston.

"Look," said Eric, offering what seemed like a bright idea at 1 A.M., "this is too big a present for me. The customs duties would be tremendous. Suppose I split the stones among the newspaper correspondents?"

Mike almost went through the ceiling.

This gift, he told Johnston, was a gift to Johnston, not to anyone else. Not to the correspondents. If Johnston did not like the gift he could dispose of it in any way he desired, but he should not insult the donor by publicly discussing what he proposed to do with it.

Once again Kalugin strode out of the room.

It was at this point that Bill White made his great contribution to Johnston's trip. He walked in on Eric and Joyce as they were holding their heads.

"My God!" Joyce said, "we've got to do something! How would it look if Eric came back from this trip with a potful of Russian stones. Why . . . there's a small fortune there. Can you imagine what people would say if Eric made a speech and said something good about Russia?"

Being a good Kansas Republican, Bill could understand very well what people would say.

"Look," he said, "the only way to get along with these people is to talk their language. You've got to appeal to them in terms they understand."

"Yeh," said Johnston gloomily, "but what do they understand?"

"There's one thing that Mike knows," said Bill sagely. "That's party discipline. He knows that better than anything else. The thing to do is to use that approach. Explain to him that you are a Republican and that your party won't let you take the stones. That's something that will get home to him."

Neither Johnston nor O'Hara was much impressed by this suggestion, but by 2 A.M. neither of them had been able to think of anything better. At that point it was agreed that one final approach should be made to Kalugin and if, when they got up in the morning, they could think of no better argument, Eric would try Bill's.

The atmosphere at breakfast was rocky. It was not improved when the Novosibirsk Mayor, an unpleasant man named Vladimir Khainousky, tried to follow up Mike's line of the night before by launching a toast in which he talked vaguely of the "terrible wrath of the Russian people when their friendship had been broken." Before Khainousky was well started, Kalugin angrily interrupted him in an under-

tone. The mayor wandered on. Three times Kalugin huskily spoke to him, and finally said: "Cut it short. You are being very stupid. After last night there is no need for further talk."

When we got up from the table, Eric told Kirilov he would like to talk to Kalugin upstairs. Eric, Joyce and White went up the staircase, followed by Mike and Kirilov. Kirilov was nervous. Mike frankly smelled a rat. He immediately took charge of the conversation.

"This is a fine thing," he said. "It is an old Russian custom, and it warms my heart to know that Mee-ster Johnston understands it. Before two good friends part they go away from the others and are alone together for a little while."

Mike was striding back and forth in the upstairs ante-chamber where a young girl attendant had stayed, day and night, sleeping on the couch to answer Johnston's beck and call.

"Yes," said Mike, "I remember my old mother when I was ready to go off to the civil war. She called me apart from the others and we were together for a while, talking heart to heart."

Eric fidgeted, wondering how he could turn the conversation.

"You know," said Mike, suddenly and soberly, "I was in the cavalry during the civil war. I was with the Cossacks. I thought it was a bad day when I didn't get at least two White Russian officers. Sometimes I got more."

Kirilov, poker-faced, was translating all this.

"Yes," said Mike, reminiscently, "we had a saying in the cavalry—'Cut hard.' Not just cut a man's head off—but slice him right down to the middle."

Mike demonstrated with a swing of his arm through the air. Kirilov hesitated and then, still poker-faced, translated, literally and slowly "right . . . down . . . to the . . . middle."

Eric grimaced. The conversation was getting nowhere.

Mike talked on. He had worked hard all his life. He had worked hard during the war under the great leadership of Stalin.

Suddenly Eric saw his opening.

"Mike," he said, "Stalin is your leader. You would do anything he told you to, wouldn't you?"

Mike nodded. Anything. He would obey his leader, no matter if it meant death. That was his discipline.

Eric sighed almost audibly.

"Well, Mike," he said, "I thought that was how you felt. Now I think I can talk to you man to man. Your discipline is that of the Communist Party, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Mike.

"I, too, am a member of a party," Eric said. "I am a member of the Republican Party of America. I am subject to its discipline, just as you are subject to the discipline of the Communist Party. That is why I wanted to talk to you. So you could understand my position. My party would not like me to accept your gift of the gems. If I take them, I must report that fact to my party. That means that I will be reprimanded for disobeying party orders. You know what that means?"

Mike bowed his head. He understood what it meant to violate the order of the party.

"You see," said Eric, "I want to ask you to do me a very great favor. I want you to take back this wonderful gift you have made to me."

Mike stood silent for a moment, looking at the floor. Then he spoke. He could indeed understand Johnston's position. He would—with great regret—take back the stones. But he would not take them back permanently. He would hold them in trusteeship. And when Johnston again came to Novosibirsk, perhaps the party line would have changed.

And he would find the stones waiting for him. Nor would they merely be these few, poor gems. During the years that passed, they would grow. And when Johnston came to Novosibirsk again they would have multiplied many times.

Warmly Johnston shook Mike's hand and pressed into it the packet of gems. Then he raced for the car to the airport. When our plane touched down at Alma-Ata several hours later, Eric was still perspiring faintly.

One Revolution in a Lifetime

I

At one of the victory banquets in Moscow after the end of the European war Stalin offered a toast to Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov. It was a toast not only to the Foreign minister's achievements during the perilous days of war but to the soundness of Soviet foreign policy.

As always, Stalin was down to earth. When, after June 22, 1941, he sought to justify to the Russian people the Soviet-German non-aggression pact he frankly said that by signing with Hitler, Russia had gained additional time to prepare against the Nazis and that Russia had made better use of the time than had Germany.

He was just as practical in his toast to Molotov. He did not praise the high ideals of Soviet foreign policy. He did not quote from history. He did not even quote Marx or Lenin. He said, simply: "A good foreign policy at times weighs more than two or three armies at the front."

Since the margin by which Russia several times averted defeat between September, 1941, and February, 1943, was not more than "one army at the front," Stalin was giving Soviet foreign policy and its director a healthy share of credit for the victories which turned the tide for Russia.

Until the full record of the Big Three conferences, and the almost daily exchange of letters between Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill is made public, no one can completely assay Soviet foreign policy during the war. However, Stalin's toast is a good guide to Soviet opinion. From the Russian viewpoint Molotov's conduct of foreign relations paid off. Possibly that should read "from Stalin's viewpoint."

What we are apt to overlook in America is that the nature of Russia's foreign relations as viewed from Moscow differs almost totally from what we get in the vantage point of Washington. The No. 1 objective of Russian foreign policy during the war was to win that war, to back up the Red Army in every way and to keep Russia in the fight. The policy achieved that objective; therefore, it succeeded. It had, however, one failure. It did not produce the Second Front which Russia thought she must almost certainly have to avert defeat—in 1942 or at least in 1943. Where the blame for that failure was laid probably is indicated by the recall from Washington of Maxim Litvinov and the recall from London of Ivan Maisky. The two Ambassadors had one assignment which took priority over all others—the creation by the Western Allies of a land front against Germany in Europe. That the assignment was beyond their powers to achieve made no difference. Their recall was notice of their failure.

There is a myth that Soviet foreign policy is, as Winston Churchill once said of Russia, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." This is a very useful myth for Russian diplomats, since it enables them to throw a mask of false inscrutability over rather obvious motives. Actually a nation's foreign policy may no more be disguised than Soviet scene painters could camouflage the Kremlin with green and yellow paint. However you daub the policy with evasion, verbiage or obliqueness, its naked outlines stand out clear and solid as a pyramid on a desert.

What confuses many foreign observers of Russia is the revolutionary ingredient in the Soviet Union. By basic Marxist-Leninist doctrine Russia is committed to bringing all the world into an order of communism which presumably would revolve about the Mother State of Communism, Russia. Whenever Russia makes a move on any plane, pur-

ist observers raise the question as to how it affects the world revolution. Students of history will recall that the monarchical chancelleries of Europe asked parallel questions about the United States for fifty or sixty years after the American Revolution. But, actually, foreign policy is rooted in history and geography, and to this rule Russia is no exception. Take a look, for example, at the foreign policy of Russia under the Romanovs.

There were certain fundamentals: A quest for warm water outlets in the landlocked west, a striving for security in continental Europe which led to constant regroupings against the dominant continental power, second-grade friction along the Asiatic border between the Russian and British colonial empires, a tendency toward expansion at the expense of sick China, and a collision of imperial interests with Japan.

What is Soviet Foreign Policy today? It is the same as that of the Czars, with one important difference—security. The conception of security is paramount in all Soviet relations with the rest of the world. And, significantly, the first step Soviet Russia took toward achieving security was to get back the lands over which Imperial Russia once claimed sovereignty.

In the West this meant a successful drive to recover all the territories lost in the First World War, and to pick up a few strategic points to improve Russia's defensive position. Thus, Russia retook the Baltic States, re-annexed Moldavia, reclaimed Karelia and Petsamo from Finland, and incorporated the eastern third of Poland. She instituted diplomatic dealings with Turkey for the return of Kars and Ardahan, which had been sliced off Armenia in 1921. But she did not try to absorb all of Finland and Poland, both of which had been semi-independent in 1914.

The acquisition of territory which had not been part of Czarist Russia was slight—the warm water port and base of

Koenigsberg, and Ruthenia, which was picked up from Czechoslovakia largely as a compliment to the wounded and troubled Ukraine.

But territorial adjustment was only a starting point toward the Soviet goal of absolute security. This doctrine is interpreted most literally by the Kremlin, despite the fact that Russian armed strength is now greater than any in either Europe or Asia. No conceivable winning combinations any longer exist against Russia in Europe or Asia. But Russia is taking no chances. She is using her overwhelming strength to create not only secure frontiers but zones of security beyond these frontiers. This, as Russia has said time and again, means the establishment of "friendly, democratic, neighborly" states on her borders.

Translated into policy, this means many things. It means a Poland tied economically, militarily and psychologically to Russia. To a lesser extent it means "friendly, neighborly, democratic" Finland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Iran.

Toward Germany the security policy is as simple as A-B-C: To reduce Germany, by whatever means may be necessary, to the rank of a fourth or fifth rate power, destroying forever the possibility that Germany herself could become a military threat to Russia, or that what is left of the Reich could be used as a place d'armes by any other continental power from which to attack the Soviet.

The objective of Russia on the long frontier from Iran east to Manchuria is the same—security. But here distance and terrain so modify the threat of security that no very active policy is now regarded as necessary. But the Far East provides a prototype of the European security problem. Here Russia and Japan had been in conflict for more than fifty years. Russia's objective here is the same as in the West, namely, a "friendly, neighborly, democratic" Manchuria

(presumably part of a "friendly, neighborly, democratic" China), a similar Korea and a Japan so crushed militarily and economically as never again to threaten her. And, as in Europe, Russia wanted warm water harbors and a reversion to the status quo ante—the recovery of Port Arthur, the Chinese Eastern Railroad, all of Sakhalin Island, and the Kuriles.

Beyond her immediate security zone Russia has secondary objectives—access to the gateways of the Mediterranean at Gibraltar and Suez, and a similar understanding on the Kiel Canal. She is interested, too, in obliterating fascism, specifically in Iberia and South America.

There is not a line in this foreign policy which any Czarist foreign minister would not have underwritten twice over as the only basically sound policy for Russia. Nothing is operating in this foreign policy from Russia's viewpoint except the "logic of facts."

II

If these are the historical and geographical minimums of Russian national security, how is the Soviet Union going about to achieve them? The Russians have a major line which they follow actively. But they also have a minor line as insurance in case the first does not work. Each line is designed to achieve the same end—but by a different route.

The major line of Russian foreign policy was fixed at Tehran and implemented at Yalta, San Francisco, and Potsdam. It was collaboration with the United States and Britain toward the common ends of world peace and security. For the Soviet this was a novel and unprecedented policy. Russia had often, particularly during the "united front" era of the mid-'Thirties, preached the doctrine of the "indivisibility of peace."

But it had been a voice crying in the wilderness. Part of the world applauded Russia's high moral principles, part

of the world sneered at them. But no one adopted them. In the years before Litvinov raised his voice at Geneva there had been deep and natural cynicism in Moscow on collaboration with the powers of the West. Presumably during the Litvinov era there was at least some hope in Moscow. But after 1937 the cynicism deepened. On the eve of the war Josef Stalin spoke with almost equal sarcasm of the Axis and its satellites, and of the Western democracies. The pact with Berlin was the direct and almost inevitable product of this disillusionment.

Now Russia had embarked on a new policy of international collaboration. But Russia well knows that the policy is almost as new and untried by the United States and Britain as by herself. She knew, too, when she set out on this course, that there were powerful enemies within both Britain and the United States of the policy of working with the Soviet Union. She knew that there were immediate points at which her foreign policy and national interests collided with those of Britain. There were no immediate points of conflict with the United States, but some could be observed just over the horizon.

Therefore, while accepting Anglo-American-Soviet collaboration as her major policy, she did not close the door to other means of attaining her security minimums. If other means of getting them were available, Russia used them, instead of waiting for Yalta or Potsdam to bring the question up. Russia is not unique in this, as anyone who has watched the Royal Navy and its acquisition of Mediterranean bases is aware.

It is from this secondary or reserve line of foreign policy that most of our antagonisms and conflicts over Russia arise. The prime mechanism of this reserve line has been military strength—the Red Army. As the Red Army advanced beyond Soviet borders it was employed to achieve Russian

security minimums. Soviet military power (plus western diplomatic pressure) forced Finland to sue for peace. With this backing Soviet diplomacy easily raked in the security minimums—Petsamo, Karelia, and bases in Porkkala. The Red Army conquered Poland and established Russia's security frontier, roughly approximating the Curzon line. It went further. When it conquered eastern Germany it set the Poles up in business in those areas of the Reich which Russia desired to amputate with the twin objective of weakening Germany and strengthening Poland.

Many Poles, including some of the staunchest members of the former Union of Polish Patriots, were worried at the grandiose western frontiers of their new State along the Oder and the Niesse. They wanted a mighty Poland. But the prospect of absorbing not only Silesia and East Prussia but also a healthy chunk of Prussia itself alarmed them. It was too big a bite. One of them frankly stated these fears to Stalin.

"The Germans," he told the Marshal, "will never forgive this. If Poland takes over all this territory the Germans will never forget. Sooner or later they will try to get it back. Any way you look at it, this means war between Poland and Germany."

"Don't worry, my friend," said Stalin. "We will help you. The Red Army stands behind every square mile of the territory Poland acquires."

Few Poles missed the implication behind Stalin's remark—the implication of Poland dependent upon Red Army bayonets for its national security. This dependency was not reduced when Potsdam agreed to let Russia allot the Poles reparations from Germany out of the Soviet share.

The Red Army marched into Romania and confirmed the cession of Moldavia. It took Hungary, and made the first steps toward redividing Transylvania, thus reversing

the process of Ribbentrop's diplomacy. Ribbentrop had rewarded Hungary's superior loyalty to the Axis by taking Transylvania from Romania and giving it to the Hungarians. Russia rewarded the less intransigent Romanians by giving it back again.

The Red Army forced Bulgaria to flip-flop into surrender, and entered Yugoslavia, to give Tito his first effective military support. It stiffened the Bulgars against the Greeks (whom Stalin had conceded to Britain's sphere of influence), and it stiffened Tito against all comers although, theoretically, Yugoslavia was a joint zone of both Russia and Britain.

The Red Army was not the only force employed by Russia in this drive. There was also the Panslavic movement. Essentially this differed little from the Panslavism encouraged by the Czarist regime at a time when three-fifths of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was composed of Slavs. It was simply a device to anchor pro-Russia sentiment in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in the solid foundation of racial feeling, historical sentiment and cultural tradition. The movement was designed to create a favorable climate of opinion toward alignment within the Russian sphere.

Dynamic communism, to the surprise of many, was abandoned almost entirely. There probably were several reasons for this. One, certainly, was the fact that revolution in foreign lands as an implement of Soviet international policy had been abandoned by Russia in 1926, when Stalin confirmed his victory over Trotsky. That, primarily, was what their quarrel was about. The slogans, of course, continued long after, and the ultimate objective remained. But the fires had gone out, almost dying in Hitler's victory in Germany in 1933 and then finally smothering in the tragedy of Spain.

The war brought the formal dissolution of the Comintern

. . . the abandonment of the Internationale and its replacement by a nationalistic Russian anthem . . . even the dropping from the masthead of the central papers of the basic slogan—"Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains."

Perhaps there were other reasons. A visitor to Russia had several frank talks with Stalin in 1944. He quoted the Marshal as saying something like this: "It is easy to talk of revolution if you have never made one. I went through the Soviet Revolution. I know what revolution means to the people and to the country. One revolution in a lifetime is enough."

This observer's report does not stand alone. There is the story told by Wanda Wasilewska, the fiery but humorless leader of the Union of Polish Patriots who is now dying of tuberculosis.

Stalin gave an extraordinary amount of time to the Polish situation, disclosing plainly his recognition of both its difficulties and its importance. He followed closely every step of Wanda's efforts to establish a strong group of pro-Soviet Poles, and her relations with the Marshal were unusually informal for formal Russia. She dropped in to see Stalin one afternoon following a banquet which the Marshal had given the night before for her Union. The dinner celebrated the arrival in Russia of several Polish underground leaders. One of these leaders was a professor in his fifties, a member of the Socialist party. He was a garrulous soul and, warmed by an appropriate number of toasts, spent a good deal of the evening talking to Stalin of his plans for the new Poland which would arise after the war.

Wasilewska asked Stalin the next afternoon what his impressions were of the evening.

"It was very interesting," Stalin said. "I was very interested to talk with the Poles, particularly with this professor friend of yours. You know, he spent the whole evening try-

ing to convince me of the necessity for communizing Poland. He wants to collectivize all the agriculture and take over all the industry."

"Well?" asked Wasilewska.

"He did not succeed in convincing me," Stalin said drily.

Then there was the diplomat who arrived in Moscow on a special mission to explore the possibility of drawing Russia and China closer together. The chief problem, as the diplomat saw it, was the question of the Chinese Communists. He tried to draw Stalin out in an effort to discover whether Russia considered the Communists a bar to rapprochement with General Chiang Kai-shek.

Stalin displayed little interest in discussing the Chinese Communists, and the diplomat had difficulty in bringing the discussion back to them. Finally Stalin said:

"Do you know what we call the Chinese Communists?"

No, the diplomat said, he did not.

"We call them margarine Communists," Stalin said.

That was as far as the diplomat ever got with Stalin and the Chinese Communist problem.

There is also the illuminating comment made by Stalin during a discussion on Germany. His visitor was interested in the Free Germany Committee and the Union of German Officers which had been founded in Russia. Many of the committee leaders were German Communists who had taken refuge in Russia after 1933. Stalin's questioner wanted to know what role Stalin expected the German Communist Party to play after Hitler was beaten.

"The German Communist Party," he said, bitterly, "could have helped us in 1933. The German party could have helped in 1941. And it could have helped since then. The German comrades did not stop Hitler in 1933. They did not stop him in 1941. Should we help them now?"

This evidence tends to indicate that the Soviet has pushed

the goal of a world converted to communism out of the realm of immediate thinking and into the undefinable future. This does not mean that Russia has denied herself the use of the international Communists in implementing her policy in Europe. Men of the Comintern will be found hard at work in every country, and particularly in Russia's "Strategic Zone" in eastern Europe, often holding key positions in the Government.

In Poland, for example, President Boleslaw Bierut is an old Comintern man. Driven out of Poland by the Pilsudski regime, he has divided the past twenty years between underground communist activity in his native land and work with the Comintern inside Russia.

There are other Comintern men in Poland, too, notably one Saul Amsterdamski, who thus far has held no official government position but who has been very active behind the scenes.

In Bulgaria old Georgi Dimitrov is active in the government. He was the Secretary-General of the Comintern. In Romania it is a little different. There the key figure, Lucretiu Patrascanu, is a native Romanian Communist who has never spent much time in Russia. William Pieck, the Communist leader of the Reichstag, who escaped to Moscow in 1933 and spent eight dreary years in the Comintern, was the mainspring of the Free Germany Committee and the Union of German Officers. He has guided much Soviet-occupation policy in Germany. Marshal Tito is a unique example of a Moscow-trained man who is openly and forcefully directing his country.

The Comintern, truly enough, has been abolished, but the men of the Comintern are carrying a heavy burden of Russia's interests in Europe. Communists deliberately have minimized their role in the "Security Zone" states, but frequently they will be found in the key posts of Minister of

Interior (in charge of internal police) and Minister of Propaganda.

There is a common denominator to the policy followed by these men in all countries. This is: Go slow. Everywhere the emphasis is on reform rather than revolution. The keynote of this policy was voiced by Molotov in April, 1944, when the Red Army entered Romania. The Soviet Foreign Minister announced that Russia contemplated no alteration of the existing social structure or governmental regime in Romania. These instructions were carried out by the Red Army with characteristic literal-mindedness. Their non-interference with Romania's internal affairs went so far that for months the Russians made no efforts to displace petty fascist officials, or even to revoke Romanian anti-Semitic legislation. Finally, Vice-Commissar Vishinsky was sent unofficially to Bucharest, shook things up, and a more active policy was adopted.*

In their propaganda to the Germans the Russians repeatedly emphasized that they did not propose to abolish the system of private capital in Germany. In Poland and Yugoslavia the line is ostensibly the same. Basic industries and establishments owned by the Germans, or German collaborationists, are taken over. Large estates are broken up and parceled out to the peasants in small plots. But small entrepreneurs carry on business as usual. And when non-Communist left-wing colleagues propose more radical changes the Communists have taken a conservative line, notably against collectivization of agriculture and the abolition of trading.

The fact is that the Communist policy in the countries of the "Security Zone" resembles that of Russia during the period of Lenin's New Economic Policy. Most of the prin-

* In September, 1945, correspondents found my old friend of the Moscow press department, Dongulov, actively advising the Romanian premier Grodza

cial means of production are taken over by the state, but private trading continues, and agriculture is not collectivized. The great surface difference between the social-economic structure of the new Poland and the Russia of 1922, for example, is the absence of revolutionary propaganda and slogans, and the emphasis upon the forms of democratic usage. To some extent, Communist policy in Poland is reminiscent of that employed by Stalin in dealing with the more backward nationalities of the Soviet Union, particularly in Central Asia, where the people were gently pushed and gently led along the path of socialization at a pace behind that of the rest of Russia.

But the seed of future change is plain enough, for example, in Poland. There the support of the landless peasant has been welded to the state by giving him a small farm. These tracts range in size from five to fifteen acres. To get land is to achieve the highest ambition of the Polish peasant. Yet Polish agricultural economy has been based on fairly efficient large-scale farming under the estate system. Cutting the land into small pieces and putting it into the hands of peasants of uncertain farming ability is bound to reduce Poland's agricultural output. Moreover, few peasants could get horses, and cows, and farm equipment. The government is trying to provide the animals and has set up some cooperative tractor stations. It has assigned expert agricultural advisers to teach the peasants how to farm their land.

There is, of course, an outside possibility that this cumbersome system may work. But if small-plot cultivation does not raise enough food to feed Poland, if the peasants find themselves incapable due to ignorance, lack of animals or machinery to cultivate their acreage, it will not be long before someone suggests the obvious alternative—collectives and cooperatives.

The destruction of German economy envisaged at Pots-

dam means the whole "Security Zone" is bound to drift into the Russian economic orbit. Just as British trade tied the Baltic states and Finland to the Western capitalist system so Russian trade, Russian security interests, native Communist leaders, and the great power of example inevitably forges the World War II succession states into the Russian system, no matter to what degree they embrace, in toto, the orthodox principles of Communist ideology. If economic conditions impel the "Security Zone" lands to embrace Communism, the Kremlin will doubtless be pleased, but it obviously wants no mobs running in the streets and no red flag propagandizing.

So far as can be foretold, this rule would appear to hold true for all but two of the border states—Finland and Czechoslovakia. Both these states constitute special exceptions. They had well-organized high-level economic and social structures before 1939. With both these states Russia has trod easily, emphasizing moderation and gentleness. Partly, no doubt, the motive was psychological—a desire to avoid any suggestion that alignment with the Russian sphere might reduce the standard of living. Partly, too, it probably was a healthy appreciation of the extent to which both these countries stand in the United States as symbols of democracy.

III

One reason for friction with Russia lies in the methods and means she employs to effectuate her policies. There is virtually no personal relationship between Soviet diplomats and American or British diplomats. The Russian diplomat receives orders which he must obey as literally as a soldier of the Red Army. There is no such thing as slipping off with a Soviet diplomat and settling a question over a quiet drink in a cocktail lounge. A customary response by a Soviet official when he is asked to do something or other is to say: "It is

very difficult." By that he really means that it is too difficult to do. And he is really serious about it, and with good reason.

The Russian diplomatic service functions, by and large, on a basis of rigid discipline and literal obedience to orders. This rule is followed so closely that foreigners frequently think Soviet diplomats are deliberately obstructionist. To take one classic example: At Yalta it was agreed that "the Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad." It was agreed to set up a commission, comprising Molotov and the British and American Ambassadors, "to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present Provisional Government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad" with a view to carrying out the Yalta objectives.

Simple though this language sounds, it proved an insuperable barrier to any progress toward the setting up of a new Polish Government. I do not know how many meetings of the Molotov, Harriman, Clark Kerr commission were held in Moscow, but for a while they met almost every day. The meetings went on until the San Francisco Conference and were continued in San Francisco.

But the Polish question, as such, was never discussed. The commission never got beyond the words "in the first instance." Molotov said this meant that they must meet first with the Polish Provisional Government, before meeting anyone else or taking any action. Clark Kerr and Harriman insisted the meaning was that the commission must first meet in Moscow and then consult with all parties to the dispute, the Provisional Government, and the Poles from within and without Poland.

Molotov said his text read "a commission to consult in Moscow in the first instance with members of the present Provisional Government, etc." The American and British texts placed the words "in the first instance" ahead of the words "in Moscow." The only apparent point of the argument was the degree of prestige which the Provisional Government would acquire if it was consulted before the other Poles.

This pedantic argument went around and around, and nothing regarding Poland ever happened. Nothing happened in Moscow. Nothing happened in San Francisco. The question remained wedged like a stone in a sea shell until Harry Hopkins went to Moscow and talked with Marshal Stalin. Then, with the reasonableness which Stalin has repeatedly demonstrated, it was settled.

The Western diplomats frankly said the Russian argument about procedure was stubborn, stalling, and stupid—if not worse. They felt that it was merely a time-consuming device to enable the Warsaw Government to consolidate its position. There is no way of proving whether or not they were right. The Soviet record of literal interpretation of written documents is so well established that it is no longer possible to determine when this type of misunderstanding is real, and when it is merely diplomatic. What is obvious, however, is that diplomatic negotiations in which one party takes a rigid position, and does not budge from it, become a very exhausting procedure.

One more point is worth noting. Such a deadlock as that over Yalta cannot occur unless both sides are intransigent. Molotov insisted on his version. His colleagues insisted on theirs. Apparently, neither side was willing to make a concession in order to speed the solution of the Polish question.

I once asked an enthusiastic amateur diplomat in Russia what he thought the prospects were for getting along with

Russia. "As you know," he said, "I'm here to try to work out by trial and error the answer to that question. I came here convinced that we would never get along if we became irritated easily over the way Russians do business. In many respects Russian ways have always been different from ours. The Russians are only now learning how to get along with us—just as we are doing with them. If we get mad every time they eat their peas with their knives, we aren't going to get very far. And they are not going to get very far if they get mad at us because we use a fork instead of a knife. We have to educate each other. The thing I want to find out here is whether they are interested in getting started on the process of give-and-take." After eighteen months of trial and error the diplomat frankly admitted he had had enough of butting his head against a stone wall. But he also thought his experiment proved that, with patience, it was possible to work with Russia.

In the Soviet foreign service there is startlingly little delegation of authority. This applies even at very high levels. For example, at San Francisco, Molotov referred most disputed points to Moscow, and waited for Kremlin approval before he agreed to the many concessions which Russia made. A Soviet diplomat apparently is almost never instructed as to the maximums and minimums which will be acceptable to his government. He is instructed to get a specific thing, and the only way he can change his position is to cable back to Moscow for new authority.

In part this represents plain bureaucracy. Officials on lower levels avoid the responsibility of making a decision by passing the question to their superior, who in turn hands the hot potato on to his own superior. In practice this means that a startling number of minor matters find their way to Stalin's desk to be decided.

As befits the diplomacy of a proletarian state, the Rus-

sians enjoy breaking stuffy traditions. They take delight in shocking delicate diplomatic ears by calling a spade a spade. They like to short-circuit formal procedures. Marshal Stalin, for instance, has on a number of occasions spoken his mind bluntly on such controversial questions as the Second Front and Poland through letters to newspaper correspondents rather than to the Ambassadors of his allies. On the other hand, the Russians are very jealous of diplomatic prerogatives of their emissaries. They are great sticklers on points of prestige, and very sensitive over any real or fancied slight. Russia dresses her envoys in the fanciest diplomatic uniforms in Europe, and she insists that they be treated with every dignity to which a great power is entitled.

The Russians are masters of what might be called a policy of "calculated rudeness" which they sometimes invoke. For example, Russia, as the war went on, became increasingly provoked with the cautious neutrality of the Swedes. Finally, they advised Sweden that her minister was *persona non grata*, and must be withdrawn. When the minister asked for permission to leave through Turkey so he might return the short way home through Germany, the Russians refused. They said he could only go home by way of Egypt and England. They would not allow him to cross enemy territory. After protracted argument, the Soviet Foreign Office won its point. The fact that if the minister had any intention of contacting the Germans he would be able to do so just as easily in Stockholm as in Berlin apparently made no impression.

Nor was this all. Once the Swedish minister had left, the NKVD guard at the Swedish legation was increased. The Swedish *chargé* and his beautiful wife were followed by at least four plainclothes men, and sometimes more. Occasionally the men stationed outside the legation would stop all callers, and ask their names and addresses. They would sug-

gest that perhaps it was better if they did not visit the legation. They did not prevent anyone from entering, but they tried to dissuade callers from going in. The Russian employees, maids, cooks, and chauffeurs at the legation, gave notice, and the *Chargé* had difficulty in finding anyone to work for him. The climax of the war of nerves occurred one day when the *Chargé* went to the diplomatic *gastronom* or grocery store to buy some provisions. He was accompanied by the usual phalanx of NKVD men. As he was buying his caviar and butter, he felt a tug at his pocket, and turned just in time to see a pickpocket fleeing with his wallet. He shouted to the plainclothes men that he had been robbed. The NKVD men stared vacantly into space, and the pickpocket quickly disappeared in the swarming throng on the sidewalk.

Then, there is the use of the Soviet press. Here one important point should be emphasized. Words have radically different values in different languages. For example, Russian speech is much more robust than American speech. A Russian political argument usually is couched in the type of vitriolic verbiage with which Horace Greeley exchanged insults with James Gordon Bennett. There is an Elizabethan vigor to Russian everyday speech. But if you translate literally these Russian phrases and expressions, they sound harsh, raucous and often vulgar in English. Thus where we spoke of "Nazi aggressors," the Russians customarily referred to them as "Fascist beasts," "lying jackals," "murderous fiends," "treacherous snakes," and other colorful variations, many of which are unprintable. Ordinary Russian young women with a knowledge of English would refer to the Germans as "those sons of bitches" without feeling that they were employing profanity.

Such language was so frequently employed in the Soviet press, whenever Russia wanted to bring pressure to support

a diplomatic view, that one cynical Allied diplomat in Moscow used to talk of founding a "Society of Fascist Beasts" in which he would be a charter member.

The verbal bombardments are set off with no apparent conception of the effect which literal translation of the Russian phraseology may have upon friendly public opinion abroad. Nor is there any apparent correlation between the degree of press abuse and the actual objectives. For example, vitriolic editorials appeared in *Izvestia* and *Pravda* against Finland while Soviet diplomats were arranging a startlingly sympathetic armistice with the Finns, and treating the Finnish plenipotentiaries with the greatest personal courtesy. Again, Ilya Elhrenbourg was being given space in *Red Star* for flamboyantly vituperative attacks on the whole German people at the very moment when the Russian propaganda to the German Army and people was couched in terms of friendly reasonableness. And when a Russian effort to extract oil concessions from Iran failed, the Soviet press launched a drive against the Iranian Government which was couched in language that would win the admiration of the late General Hugh S. Johnson. It was like using a blockbuster to kill an ant.

Sometimes, exactly what is behind a press attack never becomes completely clear. This was the case with probably the most famous single item to appear in the Soviet press during the war—the fabulous "Cairo rumor." This was a little dispatch, occupying about two inches of space on the back page—the foreign news page—of *Pravda* on January 17, 1944. It was attributed to the "special correspondent of *Pravda*" in Cairo. *Pravda*, of course, had no correspondent in Cairo. It asserted that reports were circulating in diplomatic quarters there that negotiations for a peace were in progress between the British and the Germans, either in Turkey or in Spain. It was headlined "a rumor," which in

itself was unprecedented in the Russian press, which never presents "rumors." Appearing just six weeks after Tehran—six weeks in which, so far as the Soviet press was concerned, all was peaches and cream with her Western allies—this little item caused a sensation. The reaction of the typical Russian reader was that, of course, one could not be sure that Britain was trying to make a separate peace—since the item was called a rumor—but that there must be something to it. Otherwise the Soviet press would not have dignified the report by printing it.

British diplomats made every effort to find out from the Foreign Office why the item appeared, but without success. Theories among the diplomats and correspondents in Moscow ran the gamut—from a belief that the Russians actually had reason to suspect contacts between the British and the Germans to a theory that the Russians deliberately were introducing a certain irresponsibility in the press in order to equip themselves with a new diplomatic weapon.

The second argument at least had some surface merit.

Since the whole Russian press was official, it was almost impossible for the Soviet Foreign Office to utilize that delight of the diplomats, the trial balloon. Everyone knew that if an item appeared in the Moscow press the Government stood behind it, in some way. There was no medium (outside of Stalin's letters to correspondents) by which the Government could unofficially indicate pleasure or displeasure over the course of events.

But actually, not much of a case can be made for the idea of an "officially irresponsible" press. The Russian theory of the press is that it is didactic, a medium to teach the public and to guide it. Occasionally, it may well be that a Russian editor makes a slight mistake and prints an item which is out of step with policy. But this is just the human factor.

When a Russian newspaper presents a line which is at

variance with official policy, it can be assumed that it represents a secondary policy line. Sometimes this is carried to astonishing lengths, most notably in the case of the so-called "Ehrenbourg line" regarding Germany. Ehrenbourg preached the philosophy (although he denied it) that the only good German was a dead German. This was completely at odds with the official policy laid down by Stalin, who said that neither the German nation nor even the German Army could be destroyed.

Why did Ehrenbourg continue to write and the newspapers continue to publish a viewpoint that conflicted with Stalin's? The explanation probably is that what Ehrenbourg said and wrote represented what many, many Russians—particularly in the Red Army—felt. There was a very close identification between Ehrenbourg and the morale of the Red Army. Ehrenbourg's flaming hatred and vivid patriotism had been a pillar of strength during the darkest days of the war. He had been the inspiration of the Red Army at Leningrad, at Stalingrad, at Sevastopol. At the time when the Red Army was literally stopping the Nazi horde with its own human flesh, it was Ehrenbourg's magnificent hatred, his incandescent *Russianism* (Ehrenbourg revived the practice of speaking of "*Russian* troops," "*Russian* spirit," "*Russian* courage," some months before it was taken up by government spokesmen), his vitriolic contempt for the "German pigs" which buoyed the Red Army's morale when everything seemed to be going wrong.

Not until the time came when the Red Army no longer needed his inspiration was Ehrenbourg's line cut off. This happened just three weeks before the Nazi surrender, when he was publicly rebuked in the Communist Party newspaper, *Pravda*, by the propaganda chief of the Central Committee, Georgi Alexandrov, who wrote that Ehrenbourg's thesis was "visibly erroneous." No more "Ehrenbourg line"

articles appeared in the Russian press, but he suffered no loss in favor. After several months' well-deserved rest, he resumed writing, but avoided his "erroneous" thesis.

IV

When there was famine in Persia two years ago, the Russians brought in flour and quickly distributed it among the starving Iranian peasants, particularly the peasants in the "Russian zone" of northern Iran. Much of this flour had just reached Soviet territory over the Persian Gulf supply route from America. At the time the flour was shipped back from Baku and Astrakhan all of Russia was on bitterly short rations.

When the Red Army went into Poland, its first priority job was to feed the Polish people. Working through the Poles, it set up a system of food cards and introduced into starving Poland rations as good as, or better than, those which Russia was living on. At this time, too, the Russians were importing food over the American supply lines at the rate of hundreds of thousands of tons a month because Russia could not feed her own population. Yet, war-weary Russian workers were kept on short rations in order to feed Polish mouths.

When the Red Army conquered Berlin, almost its first action was to assign trucks and personnel to bring food into the city. This was true in all the Russian-occupied area of Germany. The Red Army brought food, even for the enemy, at a time when the basic Russian food allotment had not been changed for three years.

The motive behind these acts is simple. Russia utilizes economic power to implement her foreign policy. She is not unique in her use of economics to back up diplomacy, but she carries this policy somewhat further than most powers. She also uses her weaknesses. For instance, Russia's material

losses in the war have been incredible, but she is striving to turn these losses to good account diplomatically wherever possible.

When Eric Johnston, head of the United States Chamber of Commerce, came to Russia, and talked with Stalin, one of the most pressing questions the Marshal advanced was how much of an economic depression America was likely to have once the war was over.

"How many people," he asked Johnston, "do you expect to have thrown out of work after the war?"

"I don't know," Johnston said.

"How much will we have to buy from you to keep all your people employed?" Stalin asked.

"That's hard to tell," Johnston said. "It depends on whether it is a big depression or a little one."

"Well," said Stalin, "I think you ought to start getting the figures together so we will know how much we have to buy to keep all your people employed."

Thus, even the war-weakening of Soviet economy was forged into a practical Soviet diplomatic weapon, designed to cement relations with America!

Because of her central control of industry and commerce Russia can, if she desires, wave a fairy wand and deliver wheat to Poland, even though this means that the workers of Magnitogorsk and Sverdlovsk continue on short rations. She can delay delivery of the power turbine which the Samarkand oblast badly wants and deliver it, instead, to Yugoslavia. Such a decision is within the power of the Government which, considering all factors, can decide that it is for Russia's overall benefit to provide power for Yugoslavia rather than for the Uzbeks.

In eastern Europe and Asia, Russia's accomplishments in agriculture and industry strengthen her diplomacy. And whatever their prejudices, Russia's neighbors are impressed

and awed by the visible demonstration of Russian armed might.

All of this is grist on the wheel of Soviet foreign policy. And the picture of Soviet foreign policy which emerges is one in which the immediate objectives seem clear enough—peace and security for Russia within the framework of the United Nations. But, obviously, the germ of social change is working in all those nations which are comprised in the Russian “security zone”—both in Europe and in Asia.

Does Russia expect this tendency to spread in an ever widening circle until it engulfs the world? Does she look forward to pushing her own influence aggressively beyond the “security zone”? The key to those questions probably lies, not so much in Soviet foreign policy, as in the development of her own economy.

Only after taking a good hard look at Soviet economy can you understand fully why Marshal Stalin told General Eisenhower that Russia and America must be joined in immutable friendship.

Stalin has stated, time and again, his hope and desire for collaboration with America. There is every reason to suppose that this desire and hope lay behind Tehran, and there is every reason to suppose that Stalin's logic was founded on hard economic facts rather than on personalities, or emotional kinship with the land beyond the Atlantic.

The Tough Babies

I

I started one of the first stories which I wrote from Russia by saying: "Russians are tough babies." I was thinking of the people as a whole when I wrote that, and it was only later that I came to associate the phrase with the gentlemen of the Soviet Foreign Office.

In my time at Moscow there were probably about 100 Americans in the Russian capital, exclusive of our military personnel. These Americans were either members of the Embassy staff, correspondents, fur buyers or oil experts doing some work for the Russians. With a few special exceptions the official contacts which the Americans had with the Soviet were entirely through a handful of men in the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. Thus, the character and personality of eight or ten men in the Soviet Foreign Office played—and still does—a major role in determining the climate of Soviet-American relations.

I had ample opportunity to observe the inner workings of the Foreign Office and, in addition to my daily contacts with its press department, dealt at various times with five of the Vice Commissars—Dekanozov, Vishinsky, Litvinov, Lozovsky and Maisky.

There is one characteristic which is common to them all—toughness. Dekanozov is dour—and tough. Vishinsky is razor-sharp—and tough. Litvinov is benign—and tough. Lozovsky is sardonic—and tough. Maisky is sarcastic—and tough.

They are realistic men who have come up the hard way. They have spent a lifetime serving the Soviet state on its

ideological frontiers. They are sure of themselves and sure of what their government wants. But they are human, too, and more often than they would like you to think, they make mistakes.

I first met Maisky in the Soviet Embassy in London. My appointment was for five o'clock, and I was ten minutes late because a stubborn London cabbie insisted on taking me to the Soviet consulate on a dreary southwest London street instead of the Embassy in fashionable Kensington Gardens. The Embassy is housed in a fine, Victorian atrocity of pale pinkish stone, but what captured my attention as I hurried up the driveway was a circular flower bed, carefully tended and weeded. Inside the circle was a red star carefully outlined—in petunias.

I saw Maisky at regular intervals thereafter. Sometimes I saw him at the fantastic receptions he gave on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution or on Red Army day. On those occasions he stood, spike-bearded, in the entrance hall and greeted his guests by the hundred before they shouldered their way to the vodka and caviar tables. Usually, however, I saw him alone and we had careful, precise, yet informative talks about Russian policy and Russia's relations with her allies. When I went to Russia a few months after Maisky had returned to Moscow I looked forward to seeing him. The first week I was there I sent him a note, but got no reply. A few days later my secretary telephoned his secretary. No response. I sent a second note. A third. Nothing happened. I watched for him at diplomatic affairs. He did not appear. I was beginning to believe the rumors that he was not in favor when *Pravda* announced he had been given a Soviet order. So I sent him congratulations. No acknowledgment. Some weeks later I saw a story that Maisky's reminiscences of his days as a youthful revolutionary had been published. After going through the book with

my translator I again wrote Maisky. Again I drew a blank. Quite evidently Maisky had no desire to renew our London acquaintance.

Maisky had been recalled from London and Litvinov from Washington almost simultaneously. This was generally interpreted as a gesture of pique by Moscow because the Western allies had not opened a second front. It was also suggested that the Kremlin wanted its top advisers on Western affairs close at hand in a period when problems about the West were coming to the fore. Officially, it was said that both men were engaged in studies dealing with postwar matters.

Whatever the truth of this, there was a great contrast in the attitude of the two men. Maisky had served ten years in London. He got along well with the British Foreign Office, where his views, usually delivered with a dry, quiet sarcasm, were highly regarded. He made many friends in London, but back in Moscow he became a recluse. He seldom appeared in public, and his contacts with foreigners were limited to formal dealings at the Foreign Office. Those who dealt with him there found him cold, restrained, and not at all his London self.

Litvinov, however, picked up his life in Moscow just about where he had left off to go to Washington in 1941. He appeared at foreign embassy functions and was as frank as ever in his conversation. But he handled few matters of consequence in the Foreign Office and it was evident, as he himself virtually admitted, that he had entered a period of eclipse. There was nothing new in this. Litvinov's career has a definite weathervane pattern. When the Soviet wind is blowing toward collaboration with the West, he has been Russia's outstanding spokesman. When the wind shifts, Litvinov goes into retirement. When Molotov replaced him in the spring of 1939, it was the first sure harbinger of the new

orientation in Soviet policy which led to the Soviet-German pact.

Rightly or wrongly, Molotov and Litvinov have come to symbolize the contrasting components of Soviet foreign policy—Molotov standing for Soviet realism and Litvinov for Soviet idealism. But this is probably an over-simplification. Both men have served the Soviet to the best of their ability, and circumstances as much as ideology probably have created the apparent contrast in their positions. Litvinov has repeatedly proved his usefulness to the Soviet, and there is little doubt that he will do so again if the exigencies of Soviet policy create an opportunity for him.

The member of the Foreign Office whom I saw perhaps most intimately was V. G. Dekanozov, who was Russia's Ambassador to Berlin during the brief honeymoon of the Soviet-German pact—the most cyanide-scented honeymoon on record.

Dekanozov is short and powerfully built. He probably stands not more than five feet, one inch. His face, even in repose, bears a look of concentration, and he has a strong jaw. His characteristic gesture is a slight shrug of the shoulders which he uses to dismiss arguments—those which he does not care to answer or those which he considers not worth answering. He speaks German well and French fluently, but no English. He prefers, like many Soviet diplomats, to speak through an interpreter. An interpreter gives a diplomat additional time to compose his remarks, particularly if he happens to know enough of his visitor's language to follow the drift of the conversation. The danger is the difficulty of rendering phrases and words with the proper shade of meaning, and the hazard that an interpreter may forget to translate some important remark.

In dealing with the Foreign Office I found that their procedure followed a pattern. The Russians stated their case.

You replied with arguments, bearing on the logic of the situation. They ignored your statement and proceeded to restate their own original thesis. At a later conference you might find that your argument had had some impact; but this was never admitted in so many words.

I had three interviews with Dekanozov in an effort to settle a rather difficult question. The first time I found him brusque and almost curt. He greeted me with a cool hand-clasp, waved me to a seat at a long, gleaming table of polished birch, pointedly rejected my offer of an American cigarette, took a Moskva (a Russian cigarette) from a box on the table and launched into a prepared statement. He sat impatiently while the translator rendered his remarks into English, then rose and strode back to his desk as though to end the interview without a reply from me. When I strongly insisted that I wished an opportunity to reply, he reluctantly sat down and heard me out.

This was my first experience of the perils of translation. After my talk was over the interpreter (who also acted as censor) accidentally revealed that she had overlooked translating a very important detail. "I thought you understood that," she said when I expressed amazement.

The second time I talked to Dekanozov the atmosphere was quite different. We were meeting to settle the matter which was at issue and he was almost friendly. After our business was finished he asked me to put away my notebook and talk to him just as one man to another. He threw off the formal role of representative of the Foreign Office of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Now, he was just an individual who had carried out a difficult assignment, the background of which was alien to him. He wanted to know what it was all about, how it had come up and what was the explanation of it all. He asked questions and set forth his theories—questions and theories which plainly showed

that our previous discussion had been carried on within a narrow frame of reference. Having done his chore—or so he thought—he wanted to find out what the score was. We had twenty minutes of pleasant and, I think, informative talk.

The third time I met Dekanozov the atmosphere again was chilly. He called me in because the question we thought we had settled had again arisen. Where the fault lay was uncertain but, I am sure, in Dekanozov's mind and those of his colleagues, much of the responsibility rested with him. An omission in translation may have been the root of the difficulty, actually, but that did not help matters. He talked to me from a little sheaf of red-pencil notes which I felt sure had been made in the Kremlin.

I thought of these notes later when I learned that Marshal Stalin likes to scribble with a red pencil. This was a tough interview. I had plenty to say to Dekanozov, and I said it in plain terms and with some heat. From Dekanozov there came no reply to my questions, no answer to my arguments, no response to my statements. Each time I paused for breath he returned to his original thesis and restated it with almost Siberian coldness. Once again he had an assignment to carry out—and he carried it out.

This, it seems to me, is very characteristic of Soviet diplomacy

Before my business with the Foreign Office was finally settled I had one more interview.

The American Embassy has a pleasant custom of showing a movie every Saturday afternoon for the diplomatic and press corps. Worried over this Foreign Office affair, I went out to Spasso House, hoping for a couple of hours to forget my troubles. It was a Fred Astaire picture, and there was a news reel showing some of the fighting in the Pacific. For a couple of hours it was possible to imagine that you were not in Moscow.

I walked back to the Metropole Hotel after the show. It was twilight, and the streets were filled with slushy, dirty snow. I clumped along in the dusk wondering whether the week-end would pass without further developments of spectacular nature.

Hardly had I gotten to my hotel room, however, when the phone rang. It was Vera, the press department secretary. Would I come over to the press department at 6:30 P.M. please. Certainly, I told Vera, I could come over at 6:30; but would she mind telling me what this was all about? I knew very well what it was about, of course, but I was feeling mean.

"I am instructed to tell you to be here at 6:30," she said, in robot fashion. "Mr. Pahlgunov will see you."

Pahlgunov was the tall, puffy chief of the press department of the Foreign Office. Before the war he had been Tass correspondent in Paris, and he spoke a blubbery kind of French. He had succeeded the brilliant Oumansky as director of Tass, and ran the press department on the side. I think he hoped to go back to Paris as Soviet Ambassador, chiefly because he loved French cooking. Pahlgunov was the kind of man who never refused a request and never fulfilled one.

I decided to be literal.

"That is fine," I told Vera. "I shall be glad to see Mr. Pahlgunov. But what does Mr. Pahlgunov want to see me about?"

"Just a moment," she said. I could hear muffled conversation at the other end of the line.

Then another voice came on. It was that of Dongulov, a friendly Georgian press officer.

"Mee-ster Salisbury," he said.

"Zdrastviti, Dongulov," I replied.

"I think," he said, talking with the painful effort that was required when he spoke English, "I think, Mee-ster Salisbury, that you know what this is about."

"Thank you," I said, "I guess I do."

Promptly at 6:30 I presented myself at the press department. As always during these negotiations there was much running around. Pahlgunov was present. He came out, shook my hand absent-mindedly, and then retreated into his office without saying anything more than "How do you do." Whatever it was that Pahlgunov was going to see me about had obviously set the press department on its ear. His assistants went in and out of his office like agitated puppy dogs. I sat on the hard leather settee. I felt very aloof. There was no suggestion from anyone as to what might be going on.

After fifteen minutes I got up and approached Vera.

"Mr. Pahlgunov wanted to see me," I said. "He asked me to be here at 6:30. It is now fifteen minutes of seven. I hurried to get here. Do you mind telling him I'm still waiting?"

She blushed, and went into the inner office. Pahlgunov did not appear, but Dongulov did. He shook hands fervently, and we started off. The Foreign Office is lodged in a cluster of buildings which have been thrown together by the device of cutting holes through common walls. It resembles a rabbit warren. Some of the personnel have living quarters on the upper floors. By this time I was thoroughly familiar with the route to Dekanozov's office—up an elevator to the fourth floor, through a maze of corridors, down to the second floor by elevator, up a staircase to the third floor, and so on. After two or three twistings I discovered that I was not going to see Dekanozov. This did not seem a good omen. My dealings had been with Dekanozov. The likelihood, I thought, was that my business had been trans-

ferred to another level, possibly to that of Vishinsky, the Number 2 man in the Foreign Office. I knew something of Vishinsky. He was sharp as a steel trap. He had been the prosecutor of the famous purge trials. To my mind he was a Soviet sharpshooter, and I had no desire to meet him on the draw. Still, I thought to myself, this looks like something unprecedented, and there may be a good story in it.

We threaded the corridors silently, I lost in my thoughts, and Dongulov in his. Suddenly we emerged from the dimly lighted passages into a bright, nicely decorated antechamber. There were uniformed guards standing at attention. I took in the scene in one quick glance, and then found myself being ushered into a little waiting room. It was about eight feet wide and sixteen feet long. In the center there was a solid black, carved table on which two ash trays rested. There were also a leather couch and two stiff black leather chairs. The room was painted green, and on the walls were two oil paintings—both woodland scenes, painted in two tones, green and greenish yellow. I sat down and drew out a cigarette. It seemed to me that this was the coldest, greenest room that I had ever seen—cold, icy green. It was obviously designed for the contemplation of your sins. I sat down like a kid at school waiting outside the principal's office.

"Well," I thought, "this at least is going to be exciting. I suppose I am going to see Vishinsky—which is more than any other correspondent has ever done."

I was tamping down my second cigarette when the door opened and a pleasant blond youngster in the neat gray Narkomindel uniform came in, holding the door open half way.

"Zdrastviti," he said.

"Zdrastviti," I replied.

"Mr. Molotov will see you now," he said.

"Fine," I said, "that's very fine."

I walked out into the bright corridor, gulping a little.

"Well," I thought, "this is really being done up in a package. This is the first time in history that Molotov has personally taken up a matter with a correspondent. At least I am getting the benefit of priority attention."

I walked beside the blond Narkomindel man, past the impassive guards into a large outer office where a secretary sat quietly reading. She looked up quickly and then went back to her reading. I went through a door into a very large conference room, which looked to my startled eyes as large as a car barn, but probably was only thirty or forty feet wide and seventy feet long.

At the far end of the table stood a tall, lanky Russian, also blond, also in gray uniform. He looked at me gravely, and did not speak when I stepped inside. I recognized him immediately as "the other Pavlov." (The Foreign Office has two Pavlovs, both famous interpreters. One is the youthful, nervous young man who has accompanied Molotov on his two trips to the United States and who has translated at Tehran, Yalta, Potsdam, etc. This was "the other Pavlov." who is second only to his namesake.)

As I hesitated a moment I could hear a telephone ringing in the room beyond. It rang loudly and persistently, then stopped, although I could not hear anyone answer.

A moment later a little man in a black suit and with a dead white complexion and gates-ajar collar entered from the distant doorway. He was black and white and precise and he walked with a ball-and-toe step which gave his body a slight but definable roll. This was Molotov. He looked precisely like his photographs—rather like an elderly headmaster at an English boys school.

I stepped forward and we shook hands, somewhat nervously on my part. But this seemed to me a not unfavorable

sign. He then asked me, in Russian, whether I spoke Russian. Rattled, I said: "*Ya na panamya russki.*" A flicker of a smile crossed his face, and he corrected me.

"Nyet," he said; "*ya ni panamya parusski.*"

"Da, da," I said, hastily, "*ya ni panamya parusski.*"

Molotov's correction of my faulty Russian put me somewhat at ease. No real ogre, I thought, would bother to correct my faulty syntax.

We sat down at the long conference table, Molotov at the head, myself at his right and "the other Pavlov" across from me. The room was very large and very still. Molotov carefully folded his hands on the table, and I studied his appearance. He was impeccable. His suit was dark Oxford gray and of good material. It was pressed. His shirt was white and his tie had been twisted with care. It was evident that Mr. Molotov did not have the difficulties I had with getting the maid at the Metropole to do my laundry. Fixing his eyes on mine, he spoke gravely and slowly in Russian. I opened my notebook, poised my pencil and waited for the translation. Molotov spoke for several minutes.

The interpreter finally began with a rush. It was obvious that, despite his scrawling notes, he was in a hurry to reproduce Molotov's thoughts before they faded.

During this time I had come to a decision. I had decided that Molotov had determined, before calling me in, what he proposed to say to me and what he wanted to do. Nothing I could say would change that. It was the same as with Dekanozov. He had his assignment to carry out. Therefore, I felt I might as well be honest and frank. What I said was not going to influence him against me, but I might be able to sow a few doubts.

When the interpreter had finished, I made a pointed reply. "The other Pavlov" hesitated a moment and then translated.

Molotov resumed. He did not reply to what I said. He restated his original argument. After the interview I checked my notes. I found that Molotov stated his thesis exactly eight times, and that his language hardly varied. Feeling that the time for diplomatic double talk had passed, I spoke in simple, almost blunt terms; but I was unable to encourage any real argument.

"I find Mr. Salisbury's statement," said Molotov, several times, "unacceptable. The basis of the argument is—" And he would restate his basic thesis.

I kept my eye on the clock. It was a large wall clock, about the size of a Western Union clock. The minutes ticked away. Molotov did not advance his case I did not advance mine. The longer the talk went on the more I wondered. What did the Foreign Commissar have in mind? Obviously, he had something important to say, or he would not have called me in. I noticed that we had been talking for twenty-five minutes. There was nothing in Molotov's attitude to suggest what he had in mind. He had said nothing which Dekanozov had not said some days before, but he talked with great patience, reminding me more and more of my first impression—an elderly schoolmaster dealing with a stupid and somewhat unruly child.

After nearly forty minutes Molotov, in the midst of the sixth or seventh restatement of his position, inserted parenthetically a phrase which radically modified the argument which he had been drilling into my head. He knew very well that I would recognize this and, in fact, it was obvious immediately that this was the purpose of our conversation. But nothing in his offhand assertion gave the slightest sign that he had changed his line. He did not even reply to my startled ejaculation. He just went on talking blandly as if his point was so obvious that I should have known it without his mentioning it. But he confirmed my analysis by

tactfully bringing the interview to an end a few minutes after introducing that parenthesis.

Studied casualness in stating a change of position and careful avoidance of admitting that the position has changed is just as characteristic of Soviet diplomacy as is an antipathy to written commitments and scrupulous adherence to the letter if not the spirit of any commitments ultimately put down in writing.

Molotov has given a good many examples of this. One was at San Francisco. For weeks the American and British Ambassadors had plagued him with inquiries into the fate of fourteen Polish underground leaders whom the London emigre government charged had been kidnaped by the OGPU. The question had been raised at least a dozen times, and Molotov had insisted he had no information but was investigating.

This and several other issues had bogged down the three-power Polish discussions. Sir Archibald Clark Kerr and Averell Harriman, considerably harassed, brought the problem to the San Francisco doorstep. They were getting nowhere in San Francisco, either, until one evening Molotov invited the ambassadors to his suite at the St. Francis for dinner. Over cocktails they were exchanging diplomatic small chat. Then, as they arose to go in to dinner, Molotov said, casually:

"Oh, about those Poles—the ones whom you asked me about . . . I just heard from Moscow that they have been arrested. They are going to be tried."

Molotov smiled pleasantly and led the ambassadors into the dining room. It was not until after the coffee and brandy that the plenipotentiaries recovered their aplomb sufficiently to pin him down on how the Poles had happened to be arrested and upon what charges they would be tried.

Molotov's press conference technique is masterly, al-

though the press conference is not a native Russian institution and has been approached by the Soviet Foreign Office with the gingerly fascination of a cat watching a spinning top.

It tried the idea out first during the darkest days of the war when the diplomats, the correspondents and most of the Foreign Office had been evacuated to Kuibyshev. Salty old Solomon Lozovsky conducted the conferences. He held them every day or so, hurling invective at the Nazis and wagering the correspondents that he would dine with them in Moscow before Hitler did. This was not too certain a bet when he made it but he won, of course, hands down. Unfortunately, the correspondents are still waiting to dine in Moscow with him.

When the great peril passed the Lozovsky conferences petered out, probably not so much because of the Foreign Office as because of several lazy correspondents who complained to the press department that the meetings were "a nuisance."

More than a year later, as the end of the war drew near, as diplomatic problems piled higher and higher, and as the pragmatists of the Kremlin weighed the importance of world opinion, the conferences were renewed.

Molotov gave the first one to lay down Soviet policy on Rumania, the first foreign land entered by the Red Army. The meeting was a success. Every foreign correspondent in Moscow (except one who had had more than his quota of vodka) attended. Molotov's views were extensively reported. Four Soviet correspondents also came to the conference. They did not conceal their enjoyment of the spectacle of give-and-take between the reporters and Molotov. They even asked two questions themselves, sound, technical questions which had been thought out in advance. They took no notes; but the next morning the Soviet press carried

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Molotov's text, and two of the papers added a paragraph about the correspondents asking impromptu questions.

We asked Molotov if he could not arrange to meet us regularly, and he agreed that such meetings would be desirable; but, as a matter of fact, there were no more Molotov conferences until he came to San Francisco. However, we met Vishinsky several times, and he proved—if there had been any need of proof—that he was more than competent to handle the most subtle questions which the correspondents could devise.

Vishinsky, a man in his late forties or early fifties, has a quick, glib tongue and is as gifted as the late Franklin D. Roosevelt at turning off difficult questions with a laugh. Before one of his conferences several correspondents went into a huddle. They agreed to ask him a series of innocent-sounding queries which would be followed up by a sizzler, designed to reveal the Soviet position on a controversial issue. They rehearsed their lines carefully beforehand and, once the press conference had started, began to ask the build-up questions. After the second question Vishinsky detected what was going on and brought down the reporters' house of cards by saying, in effect: "Look here, I know very well where these questions are leading me. But guess again because I'm not going to be led into the trap." The correspondents ruefully abandoned their little game.

After these preliminaries it was no surprise when Molotov took to press conferences at San Francisco as a duck takes to water. The press conference has several basic attractions to the Russians. Because their press and radio are official, it is hard for them to get much informality into diplomatic procedure. They have tried several devices, including letters by Marshal Stalin to newspaper correspondents, but none of these worked well.

Molotov tested the press conference idea at San Francisco

thoroughly, and the results probably exceeded his hopes. Between four hundred and six hundred correspondents and quasi-correspondents attended the sessions, and he had little trouble in parrying embarrassing thrusts. He conducted himself with grace and good humor and easily won a lion's share of the headlines for himself and, what was important, for Russia's position.

He did much the same thing at London.

Molotov's press conference formula was simple and effective. Balked both at San Francisco and at London by Anglo-American opposition, he simply took his case, on good moral grounds, to the court of Anglo-Saxon public opinion. This represented an outstanding advance in Soviet public relations technique. Nothing is so effective in either America or England as "taking your case to the people." Our tradition of fair play assures an especially warm reception to a man who comes forward, apparently open-handed, and says, "Here is my case, judge it as you will."

I feel sure that Molotov's experiment still somewhat bewilders his Kremlin colleagues. The Russian tradition—and this is Russian, rather than Communist—is didactic. The word is handed down from above in authoritative fashion. The informality of the American press conference in which some brash young reporter asks the Soviet Foreign Commissar the formula for a Molotov cocktail is as alien to Russia as birdsnest soup in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

Molotov is a man of great dignity. At San Francisco he was surrounded whenever he appeared in public by ten to fifteen zealous NKVD plainclothes men, whose technique had all the subtlety of a Notre Dame covey of blocking backs. Even at cocktail parties this bodyguard surrounded him. When he took a step forward, each guard took a step. If he stepped back, they stepped back. If he crossed the room, they crossed the room, in close order around him.

Ludicrous as this spectacle appeared, Molotov, somehow, managed to divorce himself completely from his cohorts. He moved about a room apparently oblivious of his escort, greeting friends and chatting with complete ease and naturalness.

Yet, despite the majesty of his bearing, Molotov can unbend. Some Allied diplomats learned that the hard way when they naively decided to test out his ability to handle vodka. The Russians are experts on vodka, and the Westerners woke the next morning with splitting headaches and a genuine admiration for the deceptively mild-mannered Foreign Commissar.

Generally speaking, Molotov is a great stickler on formality. But not always—as he has demonstrated.

After the war ended both the United States and Britain abolished censorship. Russia, which had had at least a paper censorship before the war, continued hers. Finally, in late October, 1945, the Moscow correspondents sent to Molotov a plea that the censors be sent packing. Like most correspondents' communications from the Metropole Hotel, this one was hardly devoid of emotionalism. A few days later the press department told the correspondents that Mr. Molotov found no grounds for considering their plea. This was not a surprise. The correspondents often complained to Mr. Molotov about one thing or another, and usually they were not even accorded the courtesy of a reply. But the correspondents did get a surprise when, more as a matter of form than anything else, they submitted dispatches about the censorship petition and found that the Russian censors cleared them without any changes.

They were still speculating over this surprise when Mr. Molotov held his customary diplomatic reception on the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. It was the usual glittering gathering at Spirodonovka House.

After many toasts had been drunk Molotov approached one of the correspondents.

"I would like to drink a toast with you," Molotov said.

The correspondent readily acquiesced.

Molotov asked what they should drink to. The correspondent suggested a toast to American-Russian understanding. Molotov brushed this aside.

"You're not a diplomat," he said, "and I'm not going to be one either. The thing you are really concerned about is censorship."

The correspondent agreed, and said his views had been incorporated in the petition to Molotov.

"Well," said Molotov, "what would you say to reciprocity?"

The correspondent hastily agreed that reciprocity would be fine; and they had a hearty drink to Russian-American understanding.

The next morning the Moscow correspondents awoke, shook the vodka fumes out of their heads and struggled over to the Foreign Office to write their stories. As rapidly as they turned in their cables, the censors stamped them and brought them out ready for transmission. Nothing was cut out. Pinching themselves, the correspondents tried it out the next day—with the same results. After three days they nervously decided that something had happened, and filed cables saying that censorship, for all practical purposes, seemed to have been lifted. These cables, too, went through without a cut. The day of reciprocity apparently had arrived. It ended a month later just before the Moscow conference of foreign ministers—at least temporarily.

In diplomatic dealings Molotov maintains a reserve which his colleagues, Allied or United Nations, have never been able to penetrate. Sardonic sarcasm is one of his most valuable weapons and, like most Soviet diplomats, he can fight

for a point right up to the brink of defeat and then, no matter how heated his arguments, yield with amazing grace.

Of the Narkomindel's "tough babies" Molotov is undoubtedly the toughest. Molotov, it should be remembered, is his "party" name. It means "hammer."

After Stalin—What?

I

One of the outstanding and little recognized facts in the world today is the political stability of the Soviet Union. It is a fact of immense consequence for the world, because it means that in planning or speculation about the future of the world you can chart Russia's position with great accuracy. Where England's future appears dark and troubled, where uncertainty is the outstanding fact in China and the Orient, and where sharp and bitter controversy rages over America's position, the Russian chart is clear and almost simple.

This may be good or evil, but it is well to recognize it.

While there are many in the West who still question Russia's stability, the facts show that the Soviet regime has emerged from the war with something closely approaching the "monolithic" strength of which it has long talked.

No nation which suffers a blood loss of possibly 25,000,000 lives—approximately one out of eight members of the population—and a physical loss of astronomical proportions, and emerges with its leadership more highly regarded than ever, can reasonably be charged with instability.

To be sure there are stresses in the Soviet Union. Some arise from the physical struggle into which the country has plunged to restore its economic and industrial system. Some spring from the new vista on life which was given to millions of Red Army men and women when they crossed over the Soviet frontiers into capitalist lands in pursuit of the Germans. The fear that the sight of silk stockings, watches, shoes, overcoats, better houses, more gadgets would compel the Russian troops to invidious comparisons was very real to the

Kremlin It was evidenced in a series of articles in the press, starting almost as soon as the Red Army crossed into Romania. Political workers were given special assignments to combat the glittering appeal of the capitalistic gewgaws That program is still under way as part of a general reindoc-trination campaign designed to integrate the demobilized troops into the peacetime pattern of Russia

The principal argument advanced to those who were exposed to the physical delights of the west was stated simply by Konstantin Simenov, writing in *Red Star* It was a sound, moralistic argument which held that luxury was all very well but endurance of hardship and sacrifice for the sake of one's country was far more worthy and patriotic He called on the Russians to look forward because they were "headed toward the future with their whole soul "

The attention given to this problem by the government indicates its importance, but there is no evidence to suggest that the Red Army men were so impressed by capitalist luxuries that they brought back to Russia any serious opposition to the Soviet economic and political system

The war did open a few seams in Russia, largely along the lines of ancient stresses. There was a good deal of collaboration with the Germans in the Ukraine There was collaboration by Tatars in the Crimea and by some of the Caucasus mountaineers and by Tatar groups west of Astrakhan. As a precaution against treachery the Volga German republic was dissolved and its residents were transplanted to Siberia and Kazakhstan. In punishment for disloyalty many Tatars from the Crimea and the Volga estuary were sent east and the Crimea lost its status as an autonomous republic. The same penalty was applied to the disloyal Caucasian groups. None of this disloyalty was on such a scale as to leave many scars, except in the Ukraine. There the government launched a very active program to reconvert the populace. It is notable

that the program was based on gentleness and consideration rather than harsh methods of exile and imprisonment.

II

Lenin once made a remark which Stalin is fond of quoting. Lenin said that after a revolution it takes the revolutionaries fifteen years, at least, to learn how to run their country. With nearly thirty years behind them there is little doubt that the Soviet rulers have learned how to run Russia.

Speculation often arises in the west as to what will happen in Russia when Stalin dies. The question is interesting, but the answer is hardly as exciting as westerners may think. Stalin's death will bring far less change to Russia than Roosevelt's did to America or the defeat of Churchill did to Britain.

It is safe to prophesy that the death of Stalin will cause no major change in Russian policy, foreign or domestic. Nor is Stalin's death likely to precipitate such a struggle for power as resulted when Lenin died. Nor will there be the battle between Red Army generals and the Communist Party leaders which is sometimes forecast, particularly among persons in whom the wish is likely to be father to the thought.

As a matter of fact, Stalin's health continues good, and there is no reason to anticipate his early passing from the Russian scene. If he should die, there are few Americans who know enough about the mechanics of the Soviet regime to form an intelligent opinion as to what would happen. At a guess most Americans would probably say that Molotov would succeed Stalin. Actually, there are thirteen men in Russia, thirteen of the most powerful men in the world, who know exactly what will happen when Stalin dies.

These men are Josef Stalin himself and his twelve associates of the Politburo of the Communist Party.

These thirteen men undoubtedly have known since the

start of the war exactly what would happen if Stalin should die. The Russians play the game of government as a master plays chess. They try to figure out all the possible eventualities—and they try to provide for any contingency. It is unthinkable that the No. 1 contingency of Stalin's death has not been provided for.

After Stalin, what, who and why?

The answer, naturally, is much better known in Russia than outside. One reason for this is that Stalin's successor is almost certain to be a man virtually unknown outside of Russia—a man whose name has never made the American headlines.

The name is Andrei Zhdanov. It is a big name in Russia, but I don't recall having ever heard it before I went to Moscow. Russians do not like to talk to foreigners about Stalin or his possible successor, but the only name I ever heard them mention was that of Zhdanov.

Actually, there are two other possibilities—both of them even less known beyond Russia's borders. They are Andrei A. Andreyev and Georgi M. Malenkov.

Inside Russia Zhdanov has been in the spotlight for eleven years. Stalin picked him to succeed Sergei Kirov, the Leningrad party secretary whose assassination in 1934 touched off the famous "purge." The Leningrad secretariat is a unique position in Russia. The nearest thing we have to it is the mayoralty of New York. Leningrad is the most cosmopolitan, the most western city in Russia, and running it has traditionally been the No. 2 job. From the moment he succeeded Kirov, Zhdanov was a marked man in Russia.

All three of these possible successors of Stalin are members of the Politburo, which is to Russia roughly what the board of directors is to an American corporation. There are about six million Communists in Russia. The Six Million run the country. They, in turn, are run by a Central Committee of

seventy-two members. The Politburo runs the Central Committee.

The only foreigners who have seen much of Zhdanov are the Finns. Few Americans have dealt with him, but recently Zhdanov has figured in several Moscow diplomatic receptions. That is also true of Andreyev and Malenkov.

In the Soviet pyramid those men stand just below Stalin and rank above such well known figures as Molotov, Litvinov, Kalinin, or Marshals Zhukov, Timoshenko, Rokossovsky, Budenny and Voroshilov.

You can draw up organizational charts which will show any one of the three, Zhdanov, Malenkov or Andreyev, as more important than the two others.

All three are members of the Politburo, but Zhdanov and Andreyev are full members and Malenkov is an alternate. All three are alternates as secretary-general of the Communist Party—but Zhdanov's name is listed first. This, of course, is the key position—and the only major office held by Stalin from 1923 to 1941.

All three—and only these three—are members both of the Communist Party Secretariat and of the Communist Party Organization Bureau. Malenkov was Stalin's private secretary and was named to the five-man Supreme Defense Council set up at the outbreak of war. Neither Zhdanov nor Andreyev was appointed to the council. Andreyev does not seem to hold quite so many high-ranking positions as Malenkov, yet he is chairman of the Communist Party Control Commission, which holds the fate of every party member in its hands. This commission can fire any party member—a vast power, particularly at a time when the party is digesting hundreds of thousands of new and untried members taken in during the war.

Andreyev started out as a trade-union and railroad spe-

cialist, but his greatest successes have been in the field of agriculture. Malenkov has concentrated on heavy industry.

Nevertheless, the corpulent Zhdanov is a top-heavy favorite. He is forty-nine years old, a year younger than Andreyev and five years older than Malenkov. Zhdanov is something of a wit, and his speeches—unlike the usual dry Soviet treatises—are salted with an earthy humor which is something like Stalin's. His style is simple, and unusually frank. He does not circumlocute nor does he rely very much on quotations from Stalin to back his points. He comes out bluntly and says he favors such-and-such a program for such-and-such reasons.

While boss of Leningrad Zhdanov was also in charge of the Communist Party's propaganda bureau and a leader in the drive to bring Russia back to sanity after the hysteria of the purge. Stalin picked him to keynote the new common-sense approach of 1939 and to draft the changes in party procedure which were intended not only to end the possibility of future purges, but to liberalize admission into the party and put the accent on youth.

Zhdanov also specialized in foreign affairs, becoming chairman of the Supreme Soviet Committees on foreign relations. So far as is known, his foreign policy closely paralleled Stalin's—a pro-Russian policy in which Russian interests, particularly security, came first. Zhdanov it was who wrote the "tip-off" letter in *Pravda* on June 29, 1939, which should have caused Chamberlain and Daladier to realize that it was half-past the eleventh hour if they hoped to sign a pact with Russia against Germany. Zhdanov wrote frankly that he was only putting down his personal views and that many of his friends disagreed with him. But, he said, he thought Britain and France were deliberately stalling in the negotiations and that "the next few days must show whether this is so or not."

A few days later the negotiations broke off, Russia signed

the non-aggression pact with Germany, Hitler moved into Poland and the war was on.

The Finnish war, largely conducted by his Leningrad Military District Command, may have given Zhdanov a brief eclipse; but any tarnish on his military reputation was removed by his defense of Leningrad against the Germans.

Zhdanov led Leningrad through a siege unparalleled in modern times. It was his iron determination not to yield the City of the Revolution so long as a Leningrader remained living which inspired the people to hold fast. They starved and froze and died by the hundred thousand—but the Germans could not breach the lines.

The first thing that struck me when I went to Leningrad after the siege was finally lifted and the Russians had taken the offensive was the hundreds of pictures, photographs and posters of Zhdanov. Everywhere it was Zhdanov. Stalin came second. Nowhere else in Russia was anything like this to be seen.

Now, Zhdanov's deputy has taken over the rule of Leningrad, and for a year Zhdanov has concentrated on two major tasks—running the Allied Control Commission in Finland and handling the general affairs of the Communist Party. It is notable that the Allied Control Commission in Finland has contrasted sharply with that of similar commissions in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. The Finns have found Zhdanov firm but surprisingly understanding, and his British colleagues have had a minimum of complaints and criticism.

The fact is that no one can or will truly succeed Stalin.

What may happen is that Stalin will go back to the prewar set-up in which he held only the Secretary-Generalship of the party. Before the war Molotov was Premier, Litvinov was Foreign Commissar, and Voroshilov (later succeeded by Timoshenko) was War Commissar. Molotov took over foreign affairs in the spring of 1939; and after June 22, 1941,

Stalin assumed both the premiership and the war commissariat.

Molotov may eventually resume the premiership. His successor in the Foreign Office doubtless would be Andrei Vishinsky, the present No. 2 man, who first came into the public eye as the prosecutor of the later purge trials. Vishinsky is a shrewd, brilliant man with a quick wit and a disarming ability to turn aside questions he doesn't want to answer. The war post might go either to Zhukov or to Filip Golikov, who has been possibly the closest military adviser to Stalin since 1941.

But it must be remembered that the men who hold these offices merely carry out the policy and directives initiated by the Politburo. There have been no changes in the Politburo for several years except in the death of Zhdanov's brother-in-law, Alexander Shcherbakov—another testimony to the stability of the Soviet ruling body. New elections to the Politburo should come soon, but no great changes are expected although Golikov and Vishinsky may be elected to membership. Kindly old President Kalinin probably holds his post for life. He is in his seventies and increasingly feeble, but the job is largely decorative. Nikolai Shvernik, a solid party wheelhorse, is his likely successor.

Except Zhdanov, Malenkov and Andreyev, there is no one now on the horizon who combines enough power, prestige and influence to challenge Stalin in filling the focal position of secretary-general of the party.

None of the military leaders have the prestige of these party figures and, contrarily, such a man as Zhdanov has a military prestige which challenges that of Marshal Zhukov, the No. 1 Soviet military commander.

III

If Stalin's death is not going to alter Russia's course, it is pertinent to find out just where Russia is going.

Many Americans feel that Russia's No. 1 objective is to spread communism around the world, and in this light they interpret the Soviet insistence on a "security belt" in the Balkans and middle Europe, the troubles in Iran and the dispute with Turkey. The Russians, on the other hand, insist that these moves are motivated only by a desire for complete security. Inside Russia, it must be admitted, most of the tangible evidence goes to support the Soviet viewpoint.

Certainly among the ordinary Russian people there could hardly be less interest in communism as an article for export. I never heard a Russian indicate any belief that communism would sweep the world or that it would be a good thing if it did. While the Russian press analyzes foreign events from the Marxist viewpoint, it never suggests that "come the Revolution" all this will be changed. I have never seen any Soviet suggestion that it would be a good thing for Poland or Yugoslavia, for example, to turn to communism. The Soviet press liberally reports the various measures of expropriation and land distribution carried out in Poland and Yugoslavia, but always suggests that these are long-overdue reforms rather than the first steps toward communism. Toward the so-called Chinese communists the attitude of both the press and the public is one of complete indifference. This attitude extends to personalities. The lot of the foreign communist in Moscow, especially during the war, was not an enviable one. He had difficulty getting a job, getting enough to eat, and even getting clothes to wear. I know several foreign communists or sympathizers who depended on the charity of foreign friends for their food and clothing. I never heard of any official favors for these people. In general they

were treated like third-class citizens—a certain indication of official attitude in rank-conscious Moscow. In all the time I was in Moscow I never saw mention of American communists in the Soviet press, and no Russian ever displayed the slightest interest in American communism. The only time communism in America was mentioned was when some American raised the question. At such times the Russians, party members or not, usually shrugged their shoulders or laughed. "You don't really regard communism in America as a serious question?" one Russian asked me. I said that many people in America thought it was very serious. This he found impossible to believe.

Actually, the average Russian is much like the average American in his attitude toward affairs beyond the frontier of his land. He is mildly interested, but his own country is so vast and so interesting that it preoccupies most of his thoughts.

I used to ask Russians where they would like to travel after the war—expecting them to say, as most Europeans do, to America. But in Russia the answer was different. The Russians wanted to go to the Crimea, to Central Asia, to the Caucasus, or possibly to eastern Siberia. Or they wanted to go hunting and fishing in the forests north of Moscow. I would say: "Wouldn't you like to go to America?" Many said, yes, they would like to go, but first they would like to travel around Russia.

In most countries the opinions and desires of the average person bear no necessary relation to the official policies of the government. But in Russia this is not so. The government concentrates on maintaining a definite climate of opinion among the Russian populace, and if the average Russian has no interest in spreading communism abroad or in expanding Russia over the map it can be concluded that this is what the government wants him to think and that the gov-

ernment itself thinks along these lines. If the opposite policy were being followed, the government would be certain to arouse public opinion to its active support.

What then is the objective of Russia?

It is, as has been stated time and again by Stalin and the other Russian leaders, to build up Russian production and the Russian standard of living until it is second to none. Molotov put the Soviet ambition into these words in his October Revolution anniversary address, November 7, 1945: "The enemy interrupted our peaceful creative endeavor, but we shall make up properly for all lost time and see to it that our country shall flourish." He added a remark which set his audience cheering wildly: "We will have atomic energy and many other things, too."

For years Stalin has held before Russia the example of America as a goal of material progress which the Soviet must equal. With the war won, with the security question largely settled, in the Soviet view, Russia has plunged into the colossal task of rebuilding her ruined cities and lifting up her living standards. She has launched the crusade in the spirit with which she tackled the five-year plans.

That this is the basic, No. 1 objective of the Soviet government can easily be tested by questioning ordinary Russians. Without exception those I talked with before the war's end assumed that there would be no relaxation, no breathing spell when victory was won. They assumed—as the government had prepared them to assume—that the end of the war would mean harder work than ever to make up for the damage of the war and the time lost in fighting. Older Russians told me that they did not hope for great improvements in living conditions in their time. "There is too much to be done," they said, "too much to rebuild. But our children . . . our children will have a wonderful country."

The announcement of the new five-year plan for the years

1945-1951 confirmed this and, as in all the five-year plans, the emphasis again was on heavy industry and railroads—the foundation stones of modern industrial economy.

The most important single index in Russia is undoubtedly steel. Steel Russia must have in almost endless quantities, and until steel flows in abundance from her mills it is certain that there neither will nor can be any material improvement in the Russian living standard. C. L. Sulzberger, who has made a close study of the situation, puts the critical figure at 50,000,000 tons a year. He believes that such a production rate would make possible a radical improvement in living conditions and that then, for the first time, the question may arise of some liberalization of the arbitrary methods and devices of so-called Soviet "democracy."

There are two other important facts about the Soviet future. The first is the Russian birth rate. Russia is already the dominant nation in Europe and Asia, both industrially and physically. In twenty-five years, it is estimated, her population will have risen to 250,000,000 people. If, as Russian leaders plan and anticipate, her industrial development parallels the population rise, Russia is likely to be at least the equal of the United States in strength—and quite possibly its superior. It is this fact which gives Soviet leaders both confidence and patience, no matter what their difficulties. And there is another fact which reinforces this confidence and strengthens this patience—the fact of atomic energy.

Russia can not match the galaxy of scientific and technological experts which the United States mobilized in its successful drive to release the atom. Russia is three or four years behind the United States technologically in atom exploitation. But neither of these facts particularly disheartens the Soviet. The Soviet has good atomic physicists, too. It is reasonable to suppose that already these scientists stand at the

point where our scientists did when they decided to go ahead and set up atomic plants. The Russians are confident of their ability to keep abreast of us in research and theory. While they do not have the massive physical layout which we have constructed, they feel that this is no fatal handicap for a nation of planned economy. In the long view, the Russians feel, planned economy gives them tactical advantages outweighing any temporary inferiority. While America debates, Russia orders the mobilization of technicians and labor to create atomic factories and set them going. The system of integrating science, industry and government already exists, it is old, tested and efficient, backed up with physical assets necessary for atomic exploitation—labor forces, massive cheap power, and the mineral ingredients.

There is little doubt that these factors contributed to Soviet calm over the atom discovery. They feel that their social and economic system, their great resources and—above all—time, work on their side. And they feel too with some reason that no system is better organized to exploit the resources of atomic energy, once it has been produced, than Russia's. Once they have put atomic energy into production, they feel, it may well prove a tremendous short cut toward that industrial superiority and enhanced living standard for which they long.

IV

The Russians, possibly with more realism than tact, believe that there are only two real powers in the world, the United States and Russia. China they regard largely as a fiction of the American State Department. If the Soviet Foreign Office frequently supports the American policy in China, it probably is because it feels China is a house of cards which will eventually tumble in their direction no matter how much diplomatic scotch tape is plastered on its

flimsy structure. They regard England as a has-been which has lost the power but not the habit of intrigue. Almost all of Russia's outstanding diplomatic problems—virtually all of them linked to her security fixation—are with England. Privately, the Russians, including Stalin, express rueful admiration for the bulldog tenacity with which the British fight to preserve their lost grandeurs. But they feel that eventually the British must recognize reality.

For the United States the Russians have admiration—admiration and bewilderment. Neither the average Russian nor his government understands us any better than we understand the Soviet and its people.

What is the picture which the ordinary Russian has of America?

It is a strange fantasy: There are the streets paved with gold, the dream of the emigrant of 1890. There is a mad, fantastic place called Hollywood where all the women are beautiful—but half-starved looking—and wear lip rouge and silk stockings. There is New York where everyone is a millionaire. There is Detroit where that great genius, Henry Ford, makes millions of automobiles so that every American can drive a tin lizzie. There is Chicago which makes billions of cans of Spam which are sent to Russia (why Americans should send food or clothing to Russia is something which baffles but pleases Russians. America is so far away that Russians are surprised and delighted that we even know about Russia's existence).

America is also the land of the Indian and the frontier. Russians know all about Indians and covered wagons and Daniel Boone. They have read James Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain. Many of the Russians who came to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco were amazed and also disappointed. "This is a real surprise," one of them told me.

"I supposed that San Francisco was a frontier city. I expected to see log cabins and gold miners and trappers in fur hats."

There are several great American heroes in Russia. One of them is Franklin D. Roosevelt. They know him as Russia's great and generous friend. In Leningrad during the starvation time the people called butter "Roosevelt's smile." It is true that at this same time Red Army men used to say: "Pass me some more of the Second Front." They were asking for another helping of Spam, but that sort of bitterness was not a lasting thing, nor was it very deep. Nowhere did I find more friendship or appreciation of American aid to Russia than among the Red Army men—and the closer to the front you got the more was our help appreciated.

Admiral Standley once raised a great fuss over the fact that the Soviet press never acknowledged our aid to Russia. It created quite a sensation, but proved very salutary. From that time on the Russian press published textually the quarterly lend-lease reports, listing every plane, shoe, cannon, screw and bolt we sent to the Soviet. Every Russian I knew read these reports avidly. They never failed to be impressed at the fantastic quantities of materials we were shipping to Russia. "No one but Americans would do this," they said with finality. "Here we are thousands of miles away, and yet America sends us millions of boots, thousands of tons of steel. America must be a very wonderful country. You can't realize what it means to us to know that you are our friends."

The term "American" is a superlative in Russia. If you tell a manager that his factory reminds you of an American plant, he beams all over. There is no higher praise. If you say that a Russian movie is as good as an American picture, the director is in seventh heaven. If you ask a girl whether she got her dress from New York, she walks on air. America is the criterion in Russia. If it is American, it is the best—that goes almost without saying.

But there is another side to their attitude. America is the home of those great men—Henry Ford and Franklin Roosevelt. America is the home of the best industrial production and of the Indian, too. But there is another America. This is the America which browbeats labor, which persecutes the Negro, which coddles the fascists, which tolerates enemies of its ally, Russia. This is the America of the "Cossack" police which beat down the poor workingmen who try to strike for their rights.

Russia has no Negroes, and in Russia a Negro is regarded as a wonderful curiosity. There were in 1939 slightly less than 200 Negroes in Russia. With something of the attitude of a child with a new toy the Russians clasped the American Negroes to their heart. Here, said the Russians, is a wonderful, gentle, sad people—a people so much like us except for their color. And they sing like angels. The Americans must be mad—or worse—not to love them.

There are other things which puzzle the Russians about America. They have been taught that in America there is great poverty and suffering, due to the "Capitalist Barons." They believe that in the South there are thousands of whites as well as Negroes who live under conditions of poverty and brutality worse than those of any peasant in Russia. They believe that there are hundreds of thousands of "American peasants" who live close to starvation, and they visualize these "American peasants" in terms of their own lives.

The sort of picture they get through such distorted lenses was driven home to me by a friend in Moscow who made a translation of some passages of John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" to be used as a dramatization on the Russian radio.

There is a passage in which Steinbeck describes the Joads, going west, homeless and penniless. All they have left is their jalopy and a little silver in their jeans. They stop, tired and

dusty, at a lunch counter and get some supper—hot dogs, coffee and doughnuts. My friend translated this passage and turned in the script. The editor called her in.

"This is fantastic," he said. "I have read your translation. It is an outrage. You have made a very bad mistake."

"No, indeed," said the translator. "I have followed Steinbeck exactly. That is just the way he describes the scene."

"Let's not be ridiculous," the editor said "Here is the situation. The Joads have lost their home. They have been driven from their farm. They are penniless. They are in the depths. Yet, here you have them sitting down to a wonderful meal. They start out with sausage [hot dogs], they drink coffee—with cream and sugar. They wind up by eating American cake [doughnuts]. Do you expect a Russian to believe that?"

"It is ridiculous," he went on, "no Russian will believe this. The Joads are supposed to be suffering, and yet they sit down and eat a meal which would make any Russian lick his chops. This is fantastic. Our audience would laugh at you if you put this on. Remember—the Joads have lost everything! They are starving. You must make this realistic!"

So my friend made it "realistic." In the new version the Joads camped beside a small stream. They built a little fire and heated some water in a pan. They had nothing to eat, so they put a few twigs in the water and sat around drinking the twig-flavored water to quiet their hunger pangs. In Russia that version was a great success.

It is easy to laugh at that story, but it is more important not to laugh—because the difference between living standards here and in Russia could hardly be contrasted more dramatically.

That is not the only problem which confronts the translator in Russia. Despite "For Whom the Bell Tolls," the most popular contemporary American author in Russia is

Ernest Hemingway. Hemingway has been generously translated, and his works have sold by the carload. But the translators of Hemingway have a real problem—a problem which will startle Americans who have thought of Russia for twenty-five years in terms of lurid articles in the Sunday supplements—articles about “free love,” “nationalization” of women, issuance of marriage or divorce certificates, over-the-counter, like dog tags.

The problem of translating Hemingway, in short, is his morals. Hemingway is the most difficult foreign author with whom the translators deal. Some of his stories are hopeless—they can’t be translated.

“Sometimes,” my friend told me, “I simply can’t handle Hemingway. I try to change the plot a little and skirt around the sexy parts. But it is no good. Frankly, we Russians find it hard to understand you Americans. You haven’t any morals. Those people in Hemingway are just like cattle.”

During the war the most intimate association of Russians and Americans was at the air bases which the Russians allowed us to establish in the Ukraine. This demonstrated as nothing else did the basic similarities between Russians and Americans. I don’t mean that there wasn’t friction at the bases. There was bound to be and there were plenty of incidents displaying friction among the top Russian and American officers.

But at the GI level it was different. We sent picked personnel to those three fields. They were picked not only for ability in their jobs but for presumed ability to get along with the Russians. Many of the GI’s were Russian-born or of Russian parentage. They were excited about coming to Russia, and to them it was a challenge and an opportunity. The Russian personnel was similar. Only crack Russian mechanics were assigned to the bases. It was a reward to be sent there, and many of the young Russian boys and girls in the

labor battalions were convalescent wounded—sent there as a reward for their bravery.

The GI's were bug-eyed in admiration for the way the Russians worked. Russian girls laid the steel matting for the fields under the direction of GI sergeants. The sergeants had never seen anything like it. "Look!" they said, "these kids are terrific. They did this job faster and better than a bunch of GI's!" It was the highest compliment they knew. What impressed them was the speed and energy of the Russians, their seriousness of purpose and their cleanliness. All of the Americans had been around—they had seen the English and the French and the Italians and the Middle-Easterners, universally called "wogs." The Russians were the first people they had seen who were really interested in getting a job done, who had the American competitive spirit, who got out and really sweated on a job. In no time all the GI's and the Russians were engaged in competitions to see who could learn the other's language first. Prizes were set up—a vodka party at the end of the month to the team which knew the most foreign words. In their tents at night the GI's pored over lists of Russian words that they had collected during the day. A few hundred yards away the Russian GI's were poring over the lists of American words they had collected.

The Poltava experiment proved—if proof was needed—that the American and Russian viewpoints were close enough to make cooperation possible. True, there were differences. The Russians never quite understood the light-hearted attitude of the Americans—how they could tackle a big job and laugh and wisecrack and never make a serious remark about it. And the Americans never quite understood the seriousness of the Russians, how they tackled a big job as though the fate of the world depended upon it—all solemn faces and solemn slogans. But no one at Poltava, either Russian or American, came away with any doubt as to whether

Russians and Americans could collaborate. Both sides learned there that they could collaborate and cooperate.

Militarily, Poltava was not important. Psychologically, it was probably the most important experiment in international relations which Russia or America conducted. It would be hard to say whether the Russians were more impressed by the American equipment, techniques and casual but expert attitude toward the work, or whether the Americans were more impressed by the Russian seriousness, their conscientious attitude toward all tasks and their constant striving to learn how to do it better. What Poltava proved, of course, is that whatever the difference in socio-economic systems and political philosophy, the similar geographic and physical situations of Russia and America give us an affinity in social outlook.

In many ways Russia knows more about America and Americans than we do about Russia and the Russians. Few are the Russians who have not ridden in jeeps—"wileez" as they proudly call them. Few are the Russians who do not know Spam, hotdogs, Wisconsin butter, *Amerikanski* sugar (not as sweet as Russian sugar), Eskimo pies, or American stew, American flour, American boots. Long before the war Russians knew that America was the land of the tractor, the sewing machine, the harvester, the drill plow, and a thousand and one mechanical devices.

The Sears, Roebuck catalog, introduced into Moscow by the wives of American diplomats, is a fairy dream-book to Russian women. I have seen it passed around sheet by sheet among the Russians—not that any of them ever hoped to own any of these wonderful articles, but just for the pleasure of looking at dresses or kitchen stoves which were more wonderful than any of which they had ever dreamed.

The American picture of which the Russian dreams may be fantastic, but most of the errors are in our favor. By and

large, America is the land which Russia hopes and dreams of emulating—physically. Politics is another thing. Few Russians—possibly not more than you could count on your fingers—understand the American political scene; and in this lack of comprehension, on both the Russian and the American side, exists danger not only to Russia and America but to the world.

v

The basic current fact in Russo-American relations is not Japan and MacArthur. It is not democracy in Poland or Romania. It is not communism in the United States nor the difficulties of the Vatican in Moscow. It is not the atom bomb.

It is a Soviet request for some six billion dollars in American credits.

There is nothing new about this request. It was made more than two years ago, long before the end of the war, in December, 1943, when the Russians submitted a great list of requests. Most of these were for war items, things vital for the prosecution of the war against Germany. But there were also other items—requests for dynamos to restore Dnieprstroy, for coal-mining machinery to rehabilitate the Donbas, for oil drills to expand the Volga field, for submarine cables, for shoe-building machinery, for wireless transmitters, for a thousand and one articles which were not directly related to winning the war.

These non-war requests were sorted out by American experts and placed in a special category, called Protocol Four, at this writing they are still there.

The significance of this six-billion-dollar packet is this: Russia can get along without these goods. If necessary she will do without, slow down her recovery, buy just what she can from us for cash and spread the other orders to places

where she can get credit. This is quite possible for Russia. The Russians are used to doing without, and if we do not give them the credit they will manage, somehow. The difference is between doing it the hard way and doing it the easy way. And from their standpoint the difference is just as important to us. They feel that placing an order for \$6,000,000,000 in goods is a great favor to their American friends and allies. It is impossible to explain to a Russian in terms which he comprehends that many Americans feel that if they do business with Russia they are, in effect, handicapping themselves. The ordinary Russian, like the ordinary Russian executive, admires America. He has no feeling of being in intimate competition with America. America is a land apart from all other lands, a dream world, a very superior country. The Russian is apt to be pretty realistic in his attitude toward foreign lands. He has few illusions about the countries of Europe. As Stalin likes to say of Germany: "A wolf is not bad because he is gray but because he eats the sheep." Despite this the American dream persists in Russia—both because of and in spite of the official propaganda, propaganda which on the one hand sets up America as a goal of achievement and on the other hand describes us as the cesspool of imperialistic capitalism.

Russia needs the six-billion-dollar loan from the United States, and this necessity controls her relationship with us. It explains the curious official attitude toward the United States—a blend of treacle and honey, of studied intransigence and bland acquiescence, of aggression and cooperation. Russia wants the loan. Sometimes she acts angry and huffy because we do nothing about it. Other times she acts graceful and pleasant, trying to melt our stubbornness. She is like a girl with a balky suitor, sometimes sugary and sometimes vinegary.

This is one of the reasons for the cyclical pattern of our

relations with Russia. This pattern is so marked that it has attracted widespread attention. It is like a fever chart—up and down with fluctuations so regular that they can be forecast.

For example, in the months before Tehran American opinion on the possibilities of cooperating with Russia was pessimistic. The Russians, it was generally held, were being so difficult that it was doubtful they really desired to get along with us. Then came Tehran—and overnight it was decided that Russia was okay—we could work with the Russians, after all, and the Russians really wanted to work with us. Tehran was hardly over when opinion took a nose dive. There was the Cairo rumor, plus a dozen other irritating incidents. It was said that the Russians were too difficult, there was no chance of getting on with them. This persisted until the time of the landings in France, when the frank and generous Russian reaction sent American hopes zooming again. But the hopes faded. The lengthy failure of the Russians to attack on the Warsaw front was interpreted as a deliberate policy by the Soviet to cause the western allies to shed blood. This opinion vanished when the Red Army attacked and when our own troops made a break-through in France. But there was another slump when we got up to the Rhine and were stopped by the Germans. The Russians were not moving either. Americans began to say that the Russians were holding back deliberately. Americans said this with emphasis when the Rundstedt offensive hit the Ardennes and the Russians still lay doggo. We stopped saying it when Rundstedt was halted and the Russians opened up in the east. Then came Yalta. American opinion soared. Now we really would get along with Moscow. But the Polish solution went sour. Nothing happened. Again American feeling sagged, and it went on sagging until the San Francisco conference. When Molotov agreed to come to San Francisco,

American opinion bounced up again. It dropped when San Francisco seemed to intensify our disagreements with Russia. Then Harry Hopkins was sent to Moscow, and made a quick and easy settlement of the Polish impasse with Stalin. But the elation was short-lived. The London conference of foreign ministers, with its stubborn disagreements, rocked American opinion, and the depression persisted until Secretary of State James F. Byrnes advanced the idea of a Moscow conference of foreign secretaries, in late November. The Moscow conference sent opinion up again—and it was reasonable to anticipate that the ensuing London United Nations conference would send it down.

If American-Russian relations made an up-and-down pattern, it probably could be demonstrated that this was not an independent phenomenon. The fact is that the United States and Russia have few, if any, direct controversies. We do, of course, have disputes over matters of principle and, on both sides, these range over a fairly wide field. We are interested in promoting democracy in Romania. Russia is interested in suppressing fascism in Korea. We have quite a budget of quarrels of this secondary type, but neither the Russians nor the Americans are basically much interested in such problems. Russia, like the United States, is primarily interested in itself—in better houses, better cities, better clothing, more food, more leisure for its people. The United States is interested in the same things. It is very hard for the United States to work up a temperature over Russian demands about the Dardanelles or Azerbaijan. It is equally hard for a Russian to get aroused about the Panama Canal, Argentina or the fortification of Okinawa.

But the British Foreign Office has a direct and vital interest in the Dardanelles. Free Russian access to the Dardanelles is a threat to the British lifeline through the Suez. The British Foreign Office has a direct interest in Azerbaijan, where

Russian influence impinges on India and, even more closely, on the investments of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and upon the satellite position of Turkey. In fact any move of Russia in the Middle East tends to upset the precarious Imperial British position in that troubled area. Russian influence in Poland and the Balkans is a vital threat to weakened Britain, because it is an index of the unbalance of Europe. Always, a balance of European powers has been Britain's ideal, since she then could act as a fulcrum of that balance. But now there is no balance. There is merely Russia in Europe and a collection of weak states in the West.

To America this means nothing, since we are actually the balance of the whole world, American power being so vast that it is equal to the sum of all other powers. But to Britain this is another thing. Never since before Elizabeth has Britain been so weak. Never has Britain tried to hold so much with so little. Lacking power herself, Britain seeks to utilize American power to maintain and restore the status quo ante. Vis-à-vis Russia, British diplomacy has scored one success after another—all of them transitory. Trading upon America's moralistic principles, Britain has succeeded repeatedly in setting us in controversy with Russia. But the temporary nature of these triumphs is only too obvious. Time and again we have come down on Russia with flaming attacks on the lack of democracy in Poland, or Soviet domination of Rumania, or the tyranny in Bulgaria. Yet, each time the enthusiasm of our protests has fizzled out—fizzled out in a reconsideration of what we are really interested in. Always it has turned out that we are more interested in getting along with Russia (because that is to our real advantage) than in the theoretical benefits of democracy in countries which have never known what democracy means.

I see no reason for thinking that this pattern of relations with Russia is likely to change at any early date. Actually, it

is inherent in our relationship. We have dozens of points of dispute with Russia on the plane of principle. But we have no major disputes with her so far as self-interest goes. Whatever Russia does in Poland and the Balkans, we are not going to quarrel with her very deeply. The most likely point of friction is in the Far East; and it is probably no accident that Russia's policy there could hardly be more circumspect.

If I were forecasting the course of American-Russian relations, I would say that it is bound to be marked by wrangling and disputes, growing out of the basic differences in our philosophy and point of view. I would say that for a good many years we will quarrel with Russia. But I would also say that these would be surface quarrels, and that there are few matters on which either Russia or the United States could achieve a bitter dispute. I would say that both Russia and the United States would learn a good deal about each other through these secondary quarrels. In all the time I was in Russia I never heard a Russian discuss—even theoretically—the possibility of Russia fighting the United States. And when I advanced the idea, the Russians were shocked. I think that as the years pass this idea will occur less and less to Americans. I do not think Russia and the United States will ever wage war. I can not conceive of either country attacking the other. Should this happen in the atomic age nothing else would matter very much. Obviously, there would be no victor in such a conflict. In all probability after such a conflict there would be no world.

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